DOCUMENT RESUME

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LITTLE HERDER READING SERIES.

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Identifiers-*Navajos

The Little Herder Reading Series is comprised of 4 volumes based on the life of a Navajo Indian girl. The books are written in English blank verse and describe many facets of Indian life. The volumes contain illustrations by Hoke Denetsosie which give a pictorial representation of the printed verse. The reading level is for the middle and upper elementary grades. (DK)

# LITTLE HERDER IN SPRING

ED022617

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## ANN CLARK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**
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# LITTLE HERDER IN SPRING

**ANN CLARK**

**ILLUSTRATED BY**

**HOKE DENETSOSIE**

A Publication of the Branch of Education
Bureau of Indian Affairs
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## MORNING

This morning,
when I crawled
from under my blanket,
when I stood
before my mother's hogan door,
outside looked
as if it had been crying.

The sky was hanging heavy
with gray tears.

I stood at the door
of my mother's hogan
and looked out
at the gray, sad morning.

My father came.

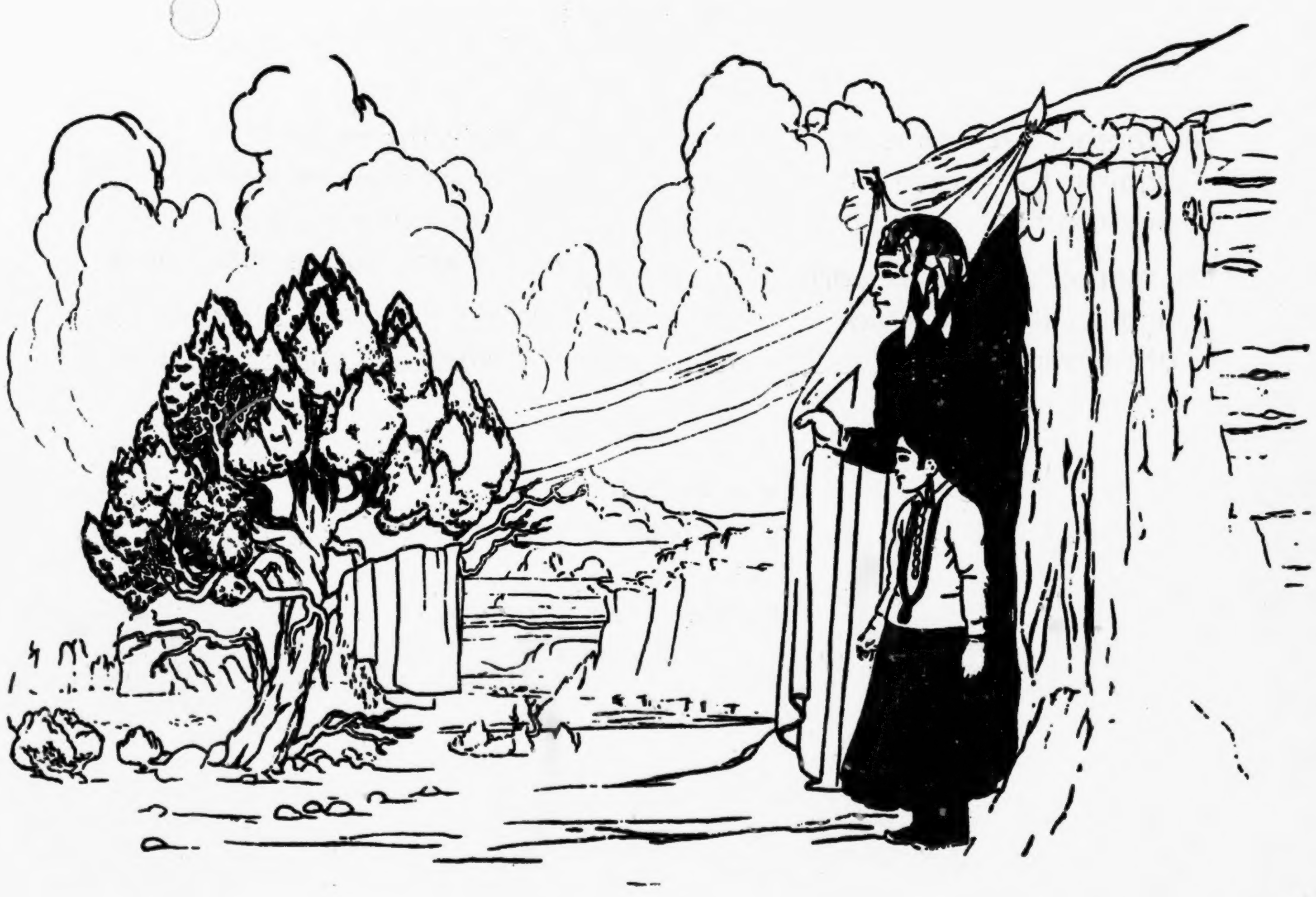
He stood beside us.

He spoke
in a happy way
to me
and to my mother.

Then the gray tears
on the sky's face
melted.

The clouds pushed away
and the sun
smiled through them.

Now it is gray again,
but I cannot forget
that when my father spoke
the sun came
and looked down
upon us.



## THE HOGAN

My mother's hogan is dry
against the gray mists
of morning.

My mother's hogan is warm
against the gray cold
of morning.

I sit in the middle
of its rounded walls,
walls that my father built
of juniper and good earth.

Walls that my father blessed
with song and corn pollen.

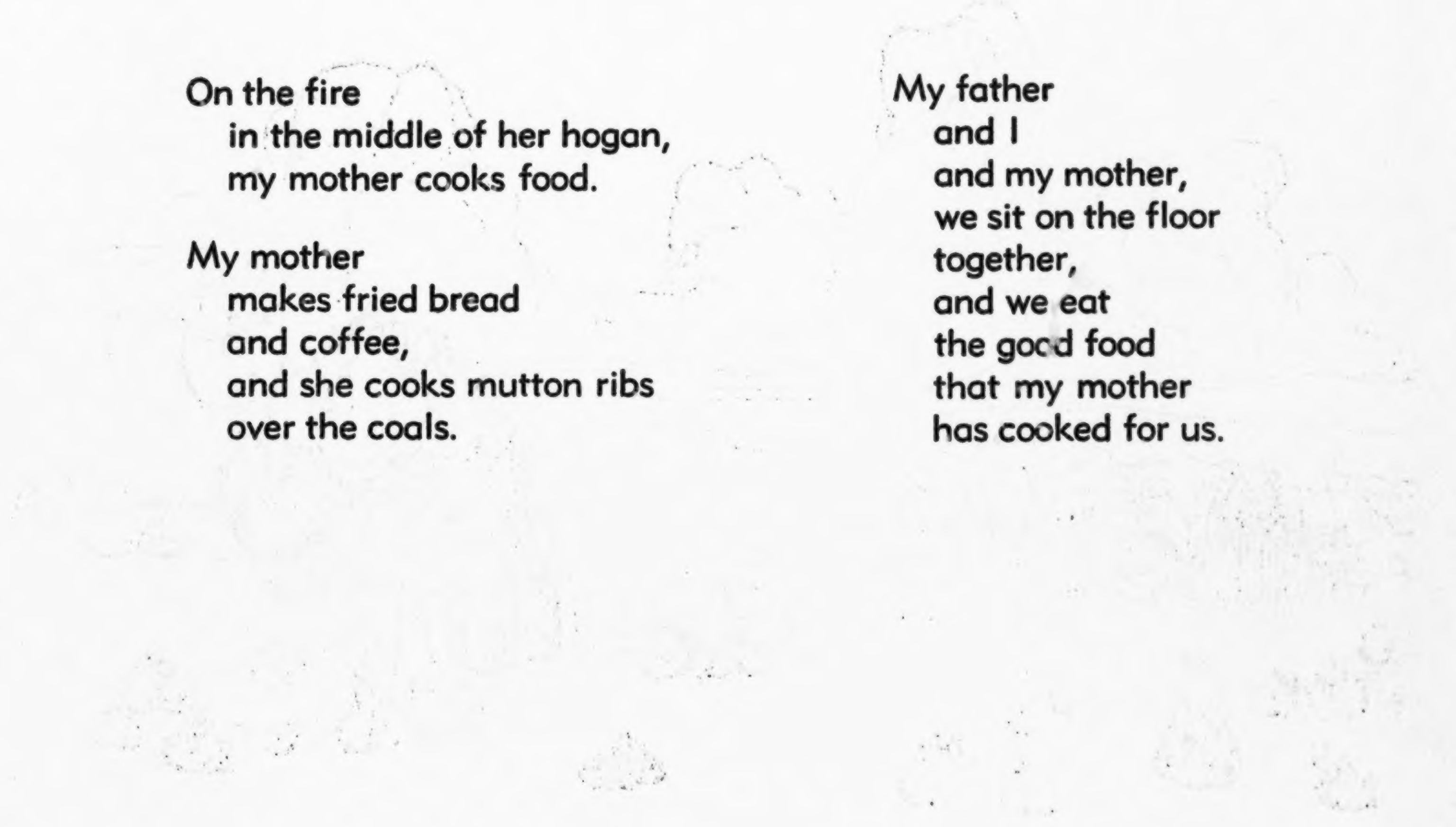
Here in the middle
of my mother's hogan
I sit
because I am happy.

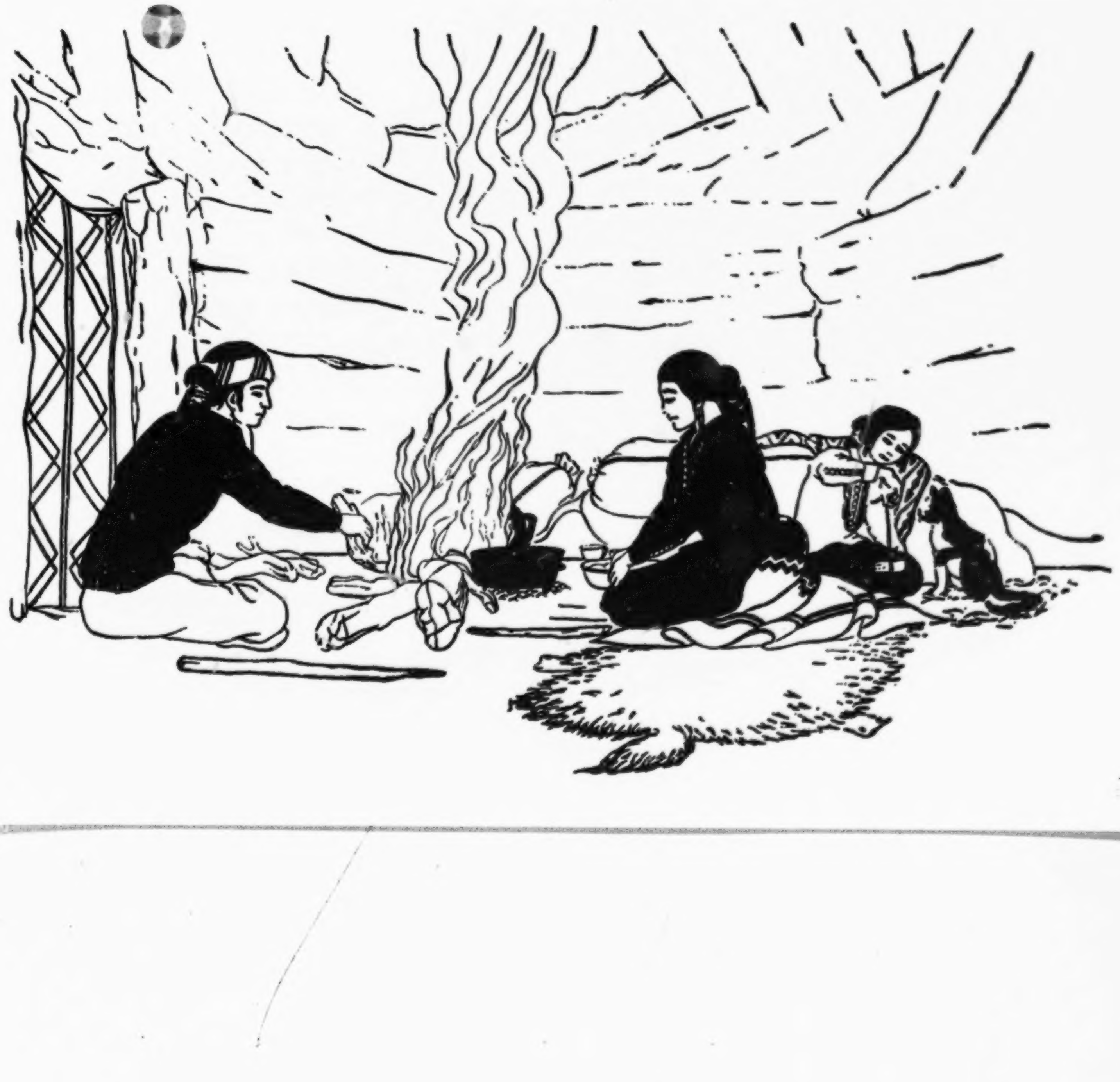
# BREAKFAST

On the fire
  in the middle of her hogan,
  my mother cooks food.

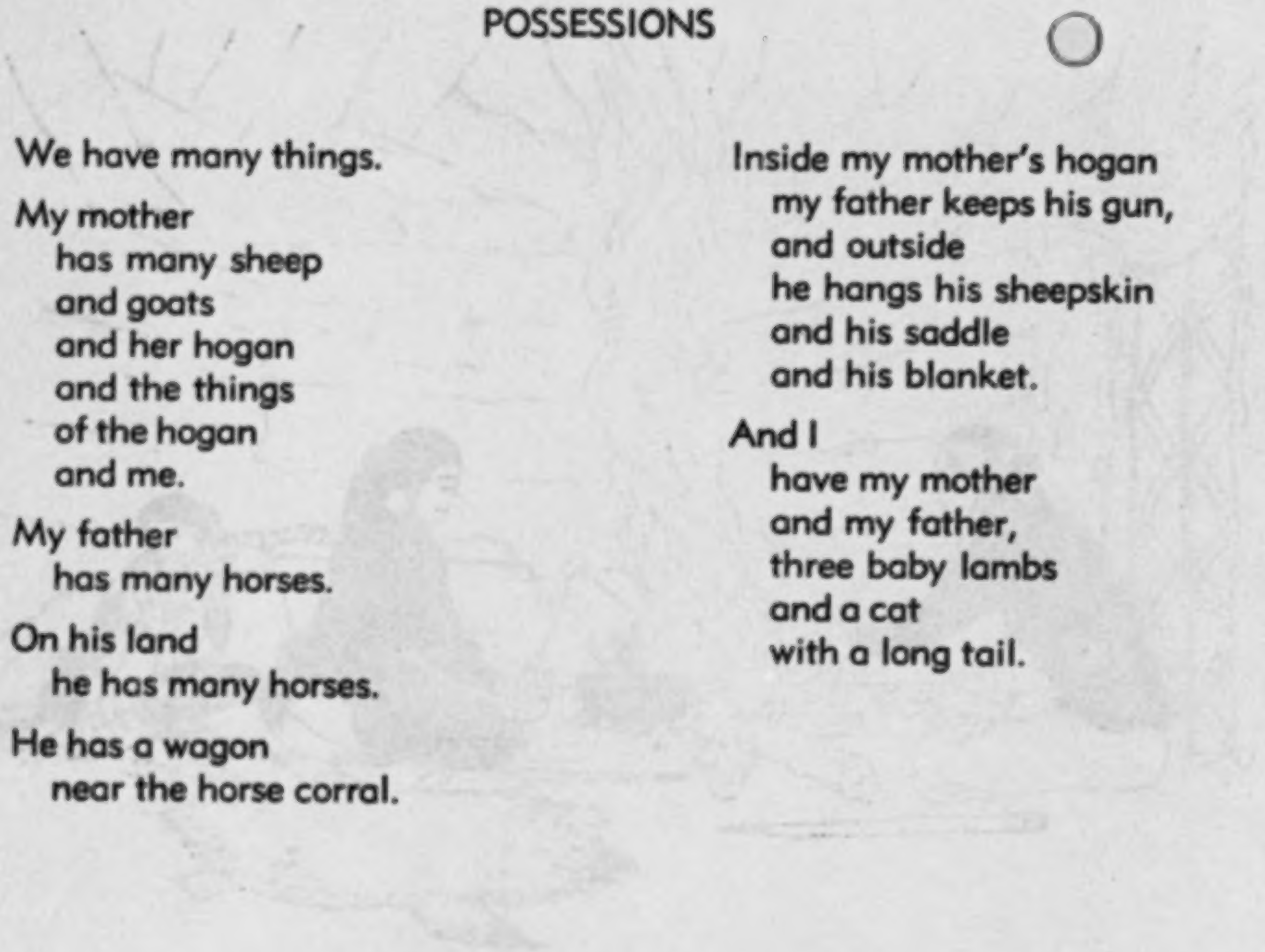
My mother
  makes fried bread
  and coffee,
  and she cooks mutton ribs
  over the coals.

My father
  and I
  and my mother,
  we sit on the floor
  together,
  and we eat
  the good food
  that my mother
  has cooked for us.





## POSSESSIONS



We have many things.

My mother
  has many sheep
  and goats
  and her hogan
  and the things
  of the hogan
  and me.

My father
  has many horses.

On his land
  he has many horses.

He has a wagon
  near the horse corral.

Inside my mother's hogan
  my father keeps his gun,
  and outside
  he hangs his sheepskin
  and his saddle
  and his blanket.

And I
  have my mother
  and my father,
  three baby lambs
  and a cat
  with a long tail.

I have a tree
that I know.

It is a little tree.

It is a crooked tree
on the top of a hill.

It knows me, too,
I think,
because it bends down low
to let me climb it
to hide away.

Behind my mother's hogan
is Beautiful Mountain.

It is mine,
I know,
because always
it is looking at me
to make me happy.

We have many things.

All of us
have many things.

One day
my father told me
that all The People
had possessions.

He said,
  "Sheep and horses
  for the men and the women
  and land for all.

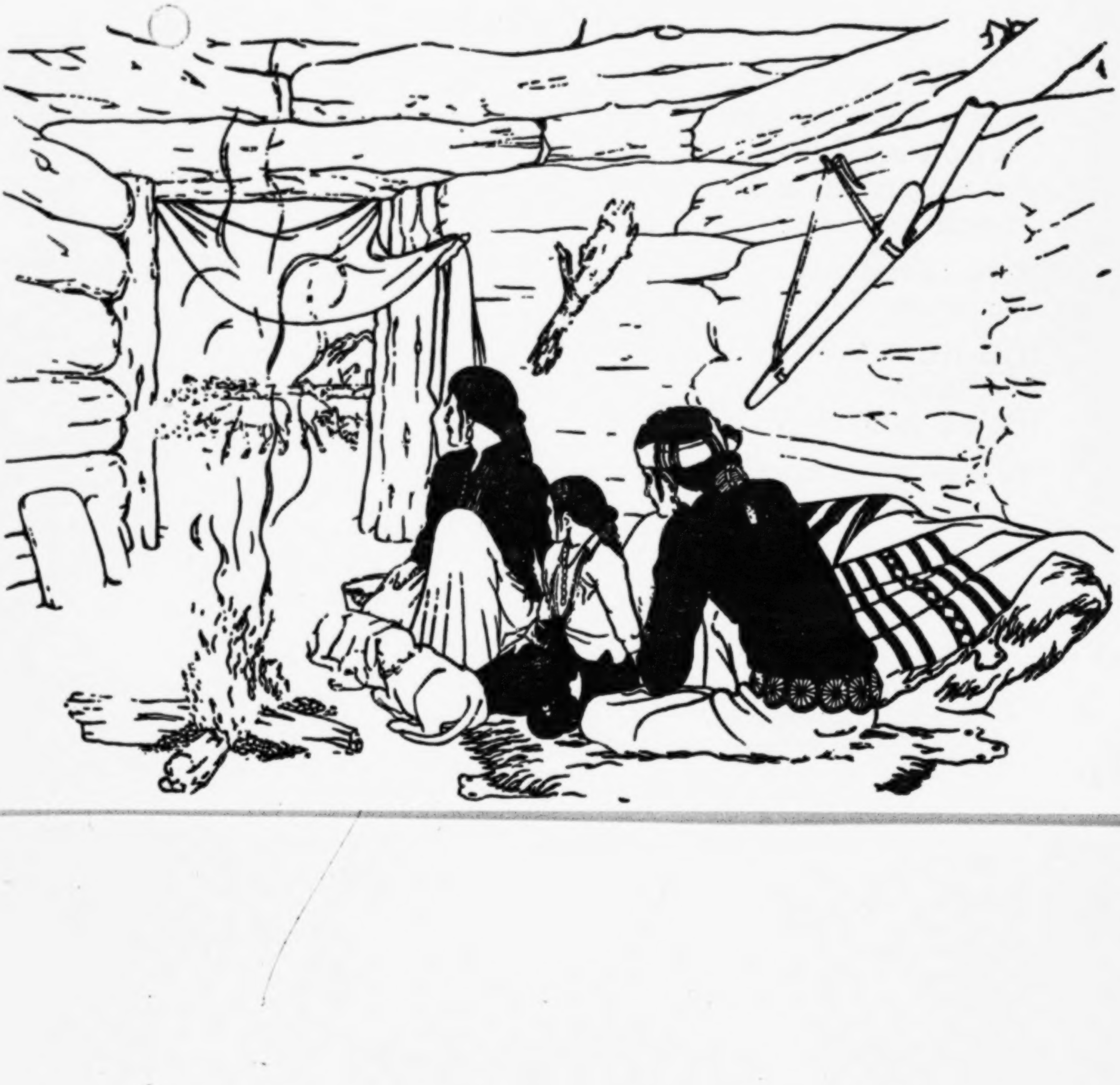
  That is enough."

My father said this.

But I think
  there should be more
  than sheep and horses
  and land for all.

There should be little girls
  for little girls to play with.

That would be enough,
  I think.



## SHEEP CORRAL

Near my mother's hogan
is the sheep corral,
a hard-packed place
fenced with poles.

There is a tree
for shade.

There is a shelter
for lambs
in the sheep corral.

The sheep stand together
in their corral.

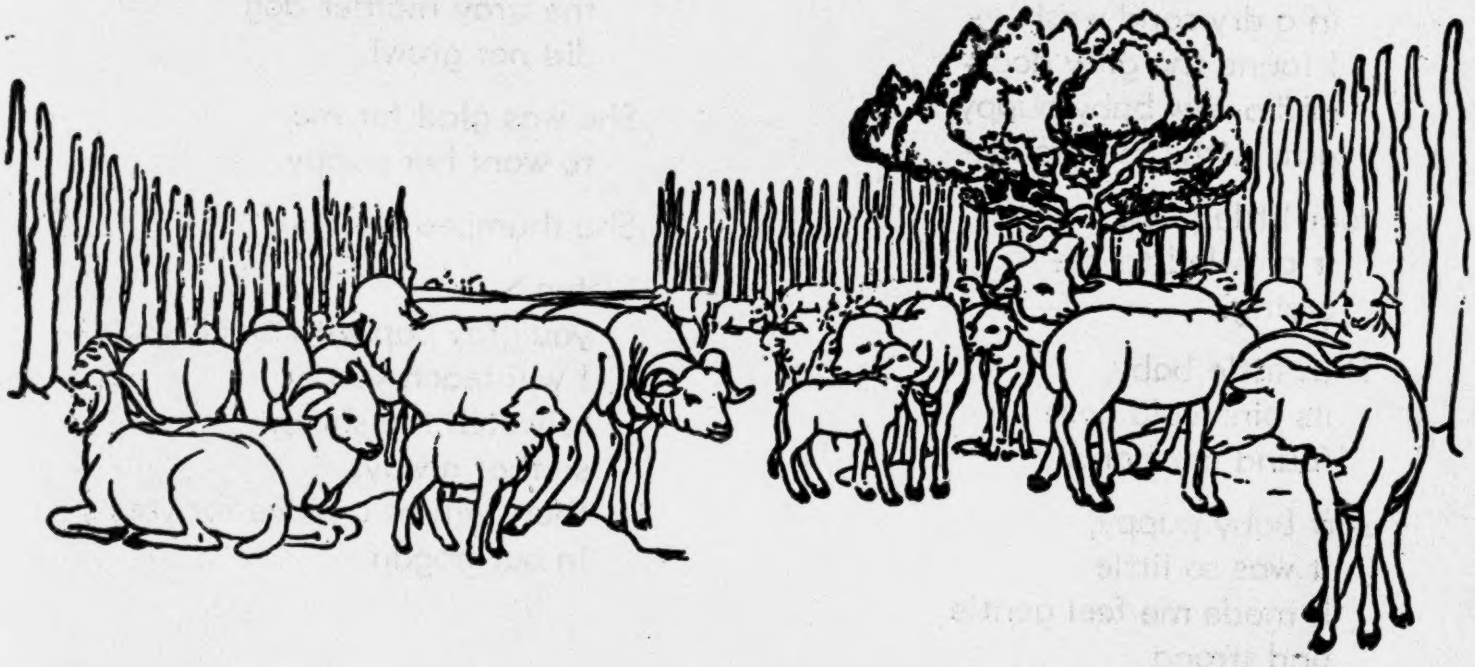
They stand close
to each other.

I think
sheep like to know
that they are many.

Sometimes
I think that way.

I think
that there are many children
all around me,
all about me.

When I am herding
and I cannot see my mother,
it is good
to play
that many children
stand together with me,
and that all outside
is my corral.



## THE PUPPY

Far from the hogan
in a dry sand wash
I found the gray dog
and a new baby puppy
gray with black spots.

Poor little puppy,
it crawled to me
crying.

Thin little baby,
its pink cold nose
found my hand.

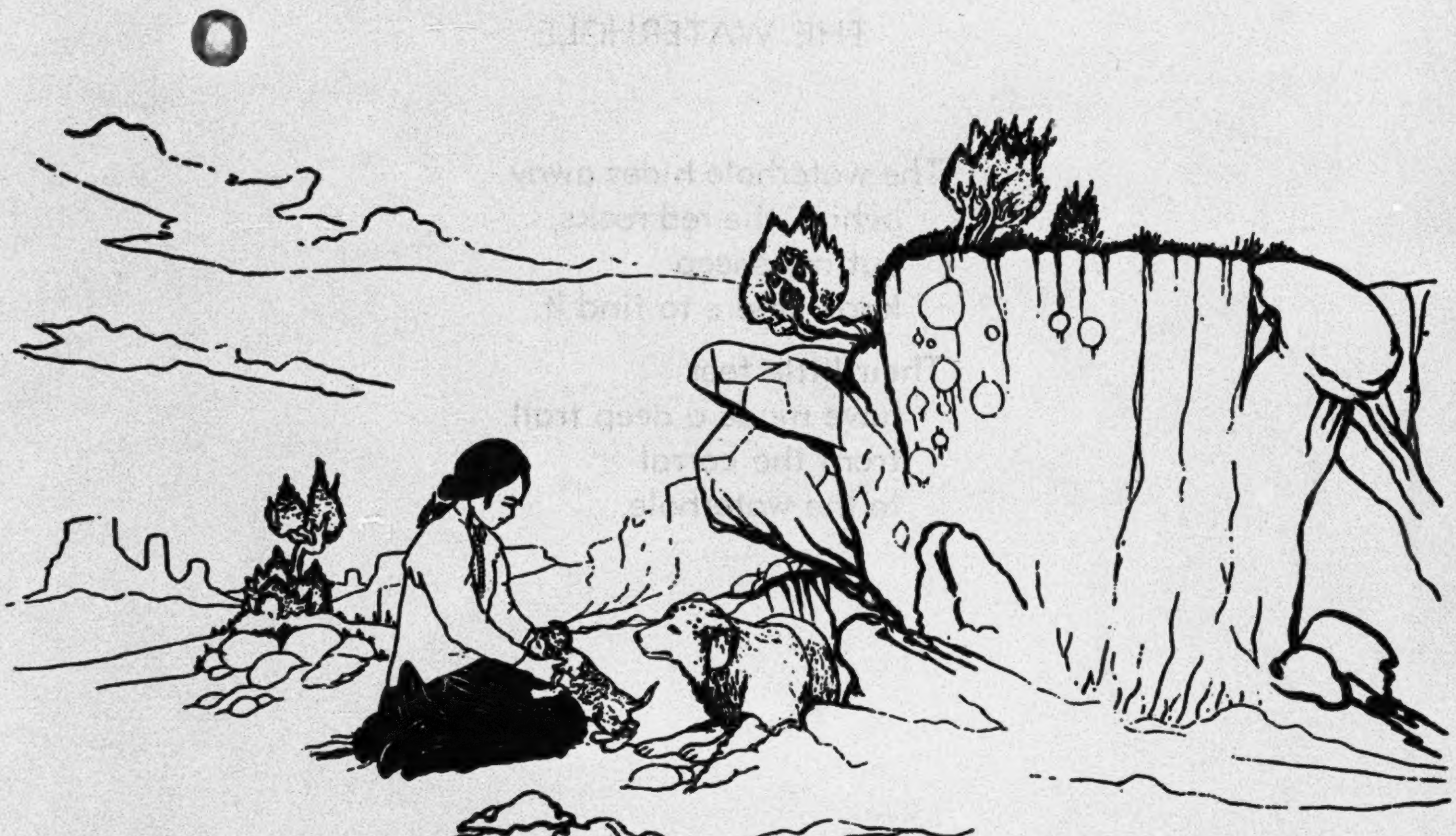
Soft baby puppy,
it was so little
it made me feel gentle
and strong
like my mother.

When I picked it up,
the gray mother dog
did not growl.

She was glad for me
to want her puppy.

She thumped her tail.

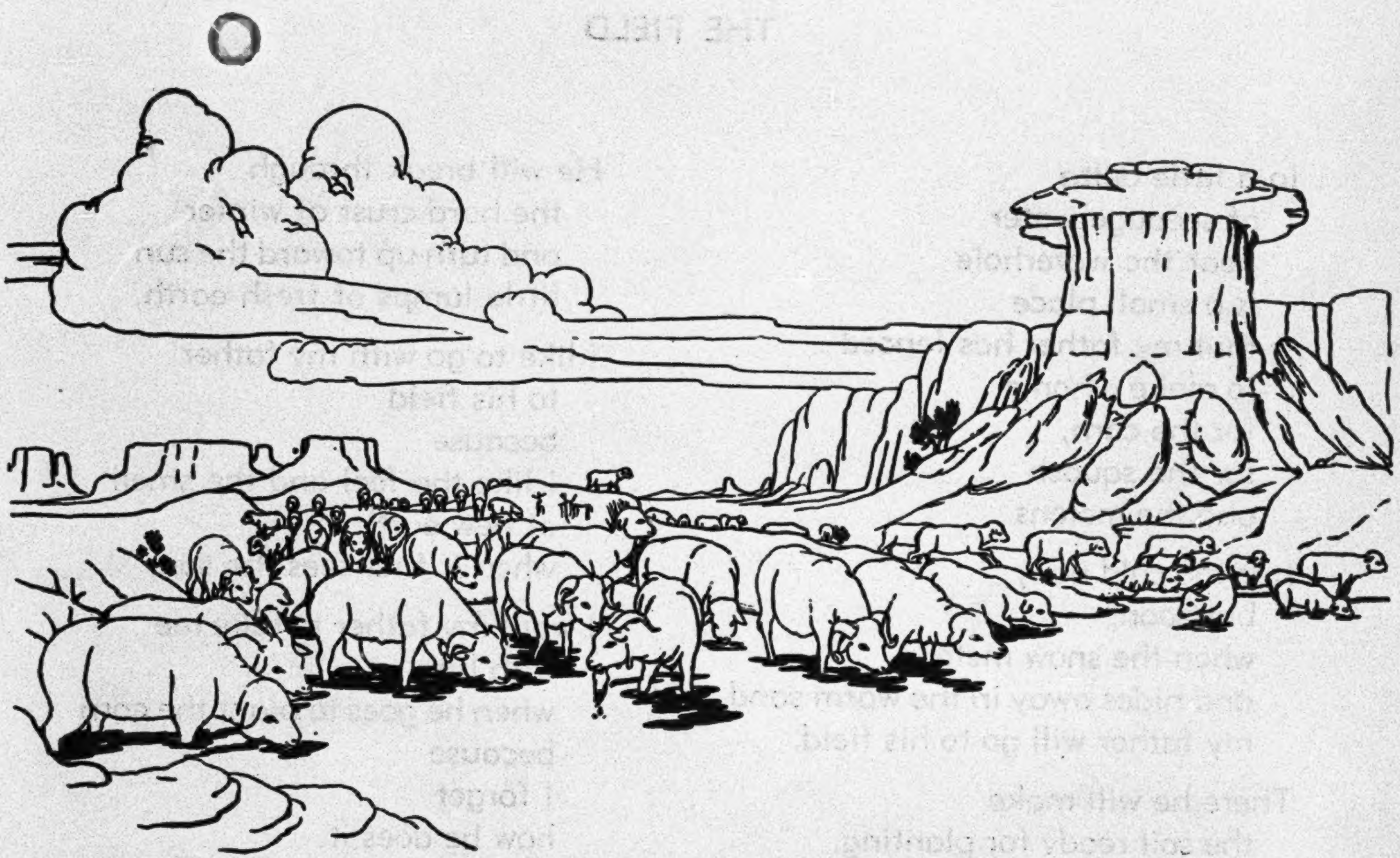
Listen,
you gray pup with black spots,
I will teach you
to watch the sheep
so that always
there will be a place for you
in our hogan.



## THE WATERHOLE

The waterhole hides away
behind the red rocks,
but my sheep
know where to find it.

Their little feet
have made a deep trail
from the corral
to the waterhole.



# THE FIELD

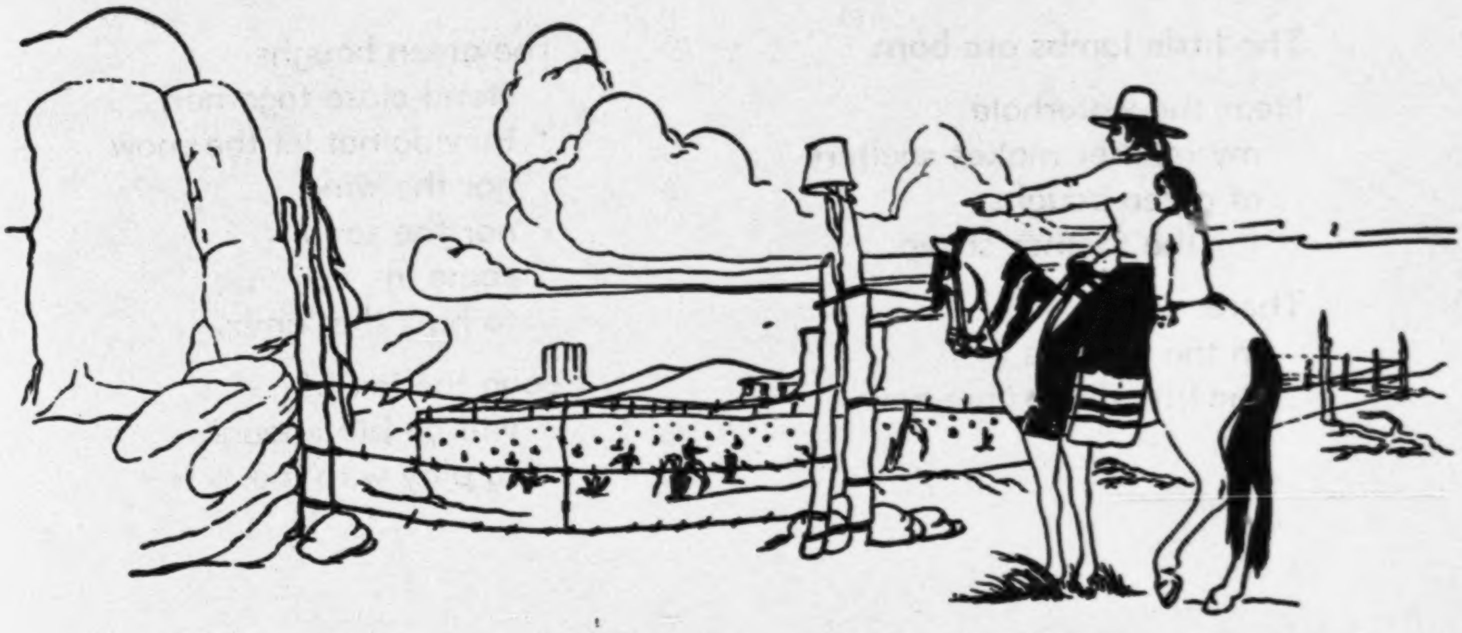
In a little delta
of seepage water
near the waterhole
is a small place
that my father has fenced
to make a home
for the corn,
for the squash
and the melons.

It is too cold now,
but soon,
when the snow melts
and hides away in the warm sand,
my father will go to his field.

There he will make
the soil ready for planting.
He will break through
the hard crust of winter
and turn up toward the sun
little lumps of fresh earth.

I like to go with my father
to his field
because
I like the feel and the smell
of new earth
when it first sees the sun.

I want my father to take me
with him
when he goes to plant the corn
because
I forget
how he does it.



# LITTLE LAMBS

The little lambs are born.

Near the waterhole
  my mother makes shelters
  of green boughs
  for the mother sheep.

There
  in the shelters
  the little lambs are born.

The green boughs
  stand close together,
  they do not let the snow
  nor the wind
  nor the sand
  come in
  to hurt the lambs.

Soon the lambs
  will be big enough
  to play with me.

## HERDING

All day I herd
  my mother's sheep.

The sheep and I,
  we have a way of going
  that is always the same.

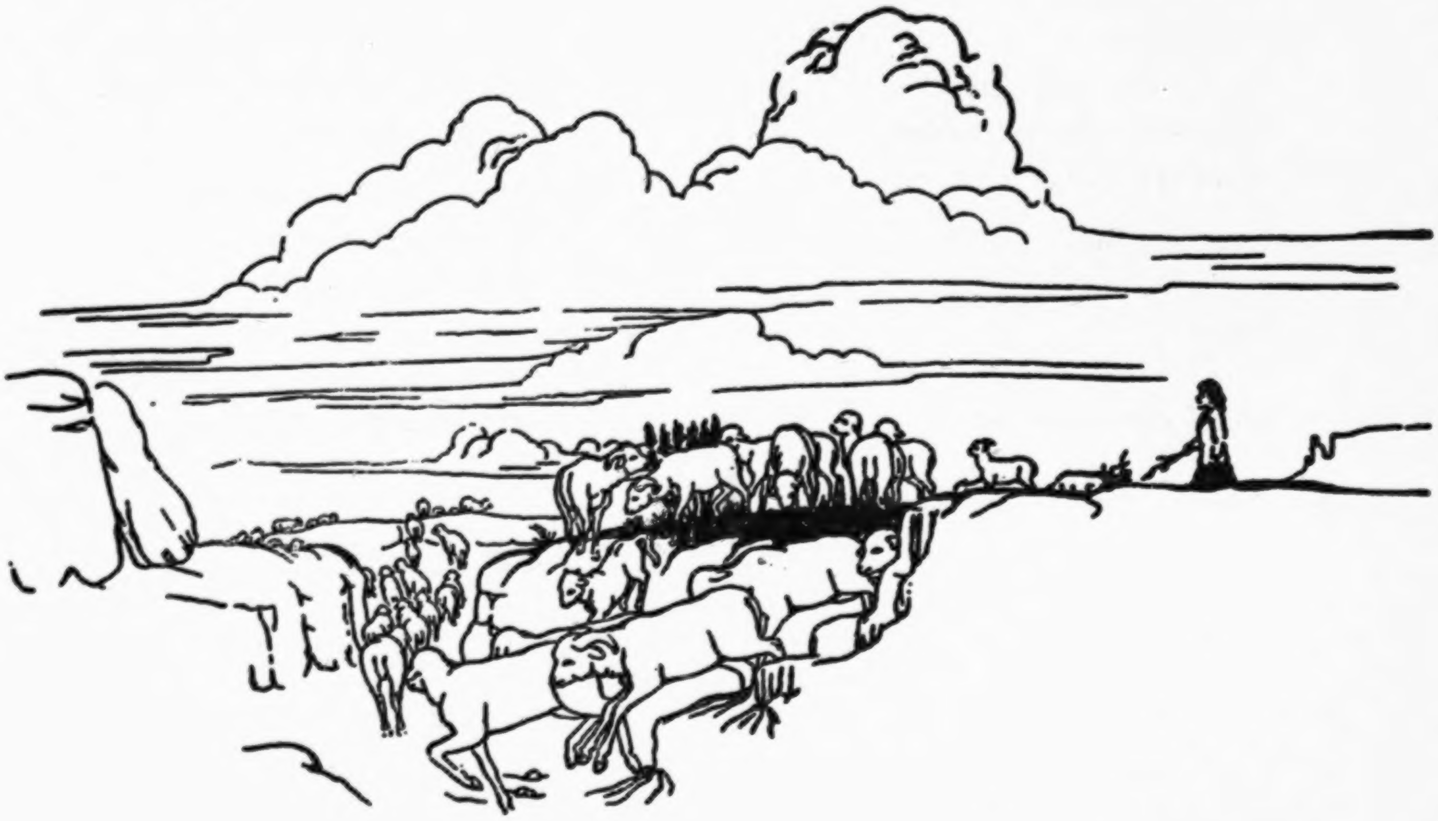
From the corral we go
  to the waterhole
  and through the arroyo
  to the sagebrush
  then back again.

Outside is round
  like the sheep corral.

Outside is round
  like my mother's hogan,
  but it is bigger.

Outside is big,
  big,
  so big.

Sometimes
  when I am alone
  with my mother's sheep,
  I am afraid.



I cannot say
with words
the things
that make me afraid
because I do not know
what they are.

But sometimes
outside is so still
and big
and empty
and I am so little.

The red rocks
are so high
and Beautiful Mountain
behind my mother's hogan
seems far away.

Nothing walks with me,
but the sheep,
just the sheep,
and I am so little
walking along
in the big outside.

I am [illegible] little,
I am afraid.

And then
near by
I see my mother
at her hogan door.

The red rocks
seem to bend down
to look at me
in a good way
and Beautiful Mountain
comes closer.

All things are good again
because
my mother is near me.

I am not afraid.

Today is cold.

There is wind
and snow
and sand
and always wind.

I take the sheep
to the waterhole
and the wind goes with us.

## LITTLE BELLS

I have little bells
on my belt fringe.

Little bells,
silver bells,
hanging on my belt fringe.

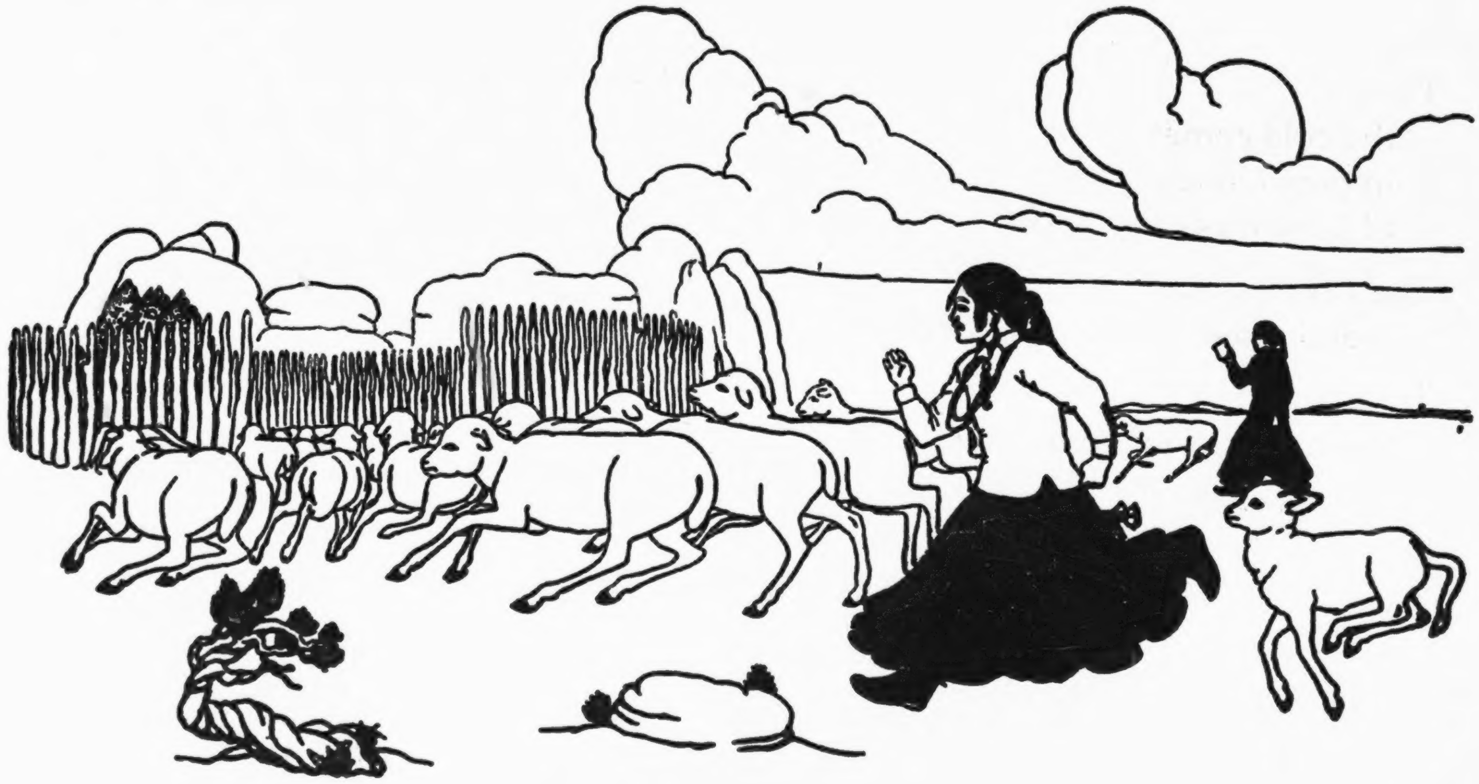
My mother has a tin can
filled with stones.

She rattles it
to tell the sheep
to hurry.

But I have little bells
tied to my belt fringe.

When I run
the little bells laugh
and say to the sheep,

"Hurry,
hurry."



# LAMBS IN THE SNOW

Today
  the cold comes
  in gray clouds
  of blowing snow.

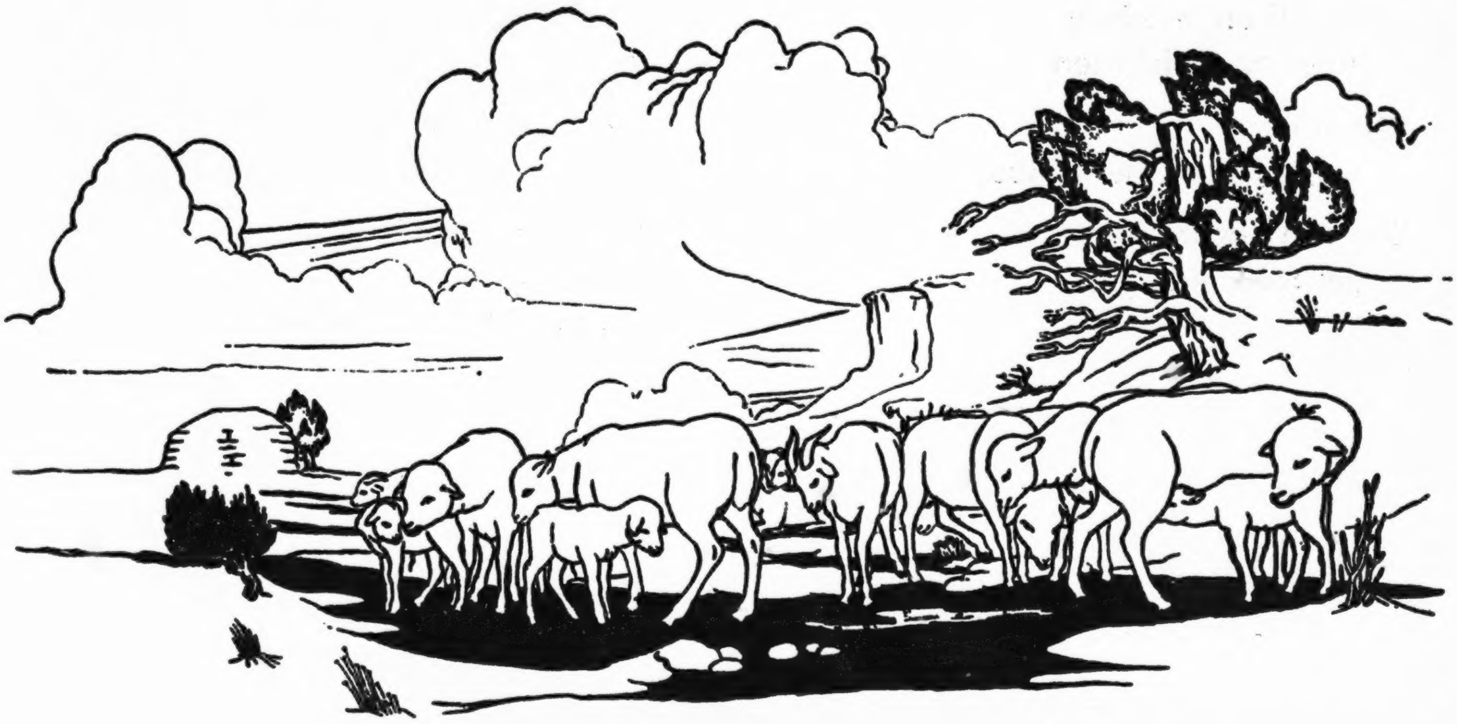
The little lambs
  stand close to their mothers.

They think
  the cold has come to stay.

Yesterday the sky was blue
  and the sun warmed the land.

The lambs do not know
  that sometimes
  cold days make mistakes
  and come again
  after they should have gone away.

They do not know
  that tomorrow will be warm again.



They have not been here
long enough
to know these things
and their mothers
have not told them.

My mother
is watching the lambs.

She will not let them
get too cold.

My father says,
"Next year
I will try the white man's way
of breeding the sheep.

Then the lambs
will be born later,
when summer has come to stay."

My mother says, "Yes,
next year
we will try that way."

# THE WIND

There are many things
about the wind
that I do not know.

I have not seen the wind,
and no one has told me
where the wind lives,
or where it is going
when I hear it
and when I feel it
rushing by.

And something more
I do not know about the wind.

I do not know if it is angry
or if it is playing
and just doing the things it does
for fun.

Sometimes
the wind gathers the sand
into whirlwinds
and makes them dance
over the flat lands
until they are tired
and lie down
to get their breath.

Sometimes
the wind bends the wild grass
down to the ground,
and makes the sagebrush
bow its head
as if a giant moccasin
had stepped on them
in passing.

Today the wind makes the
tumbleweeds
look like sheep
jumping off high banks
and racing up arroyos
with no dog to guard them,
with no herder to guide them.

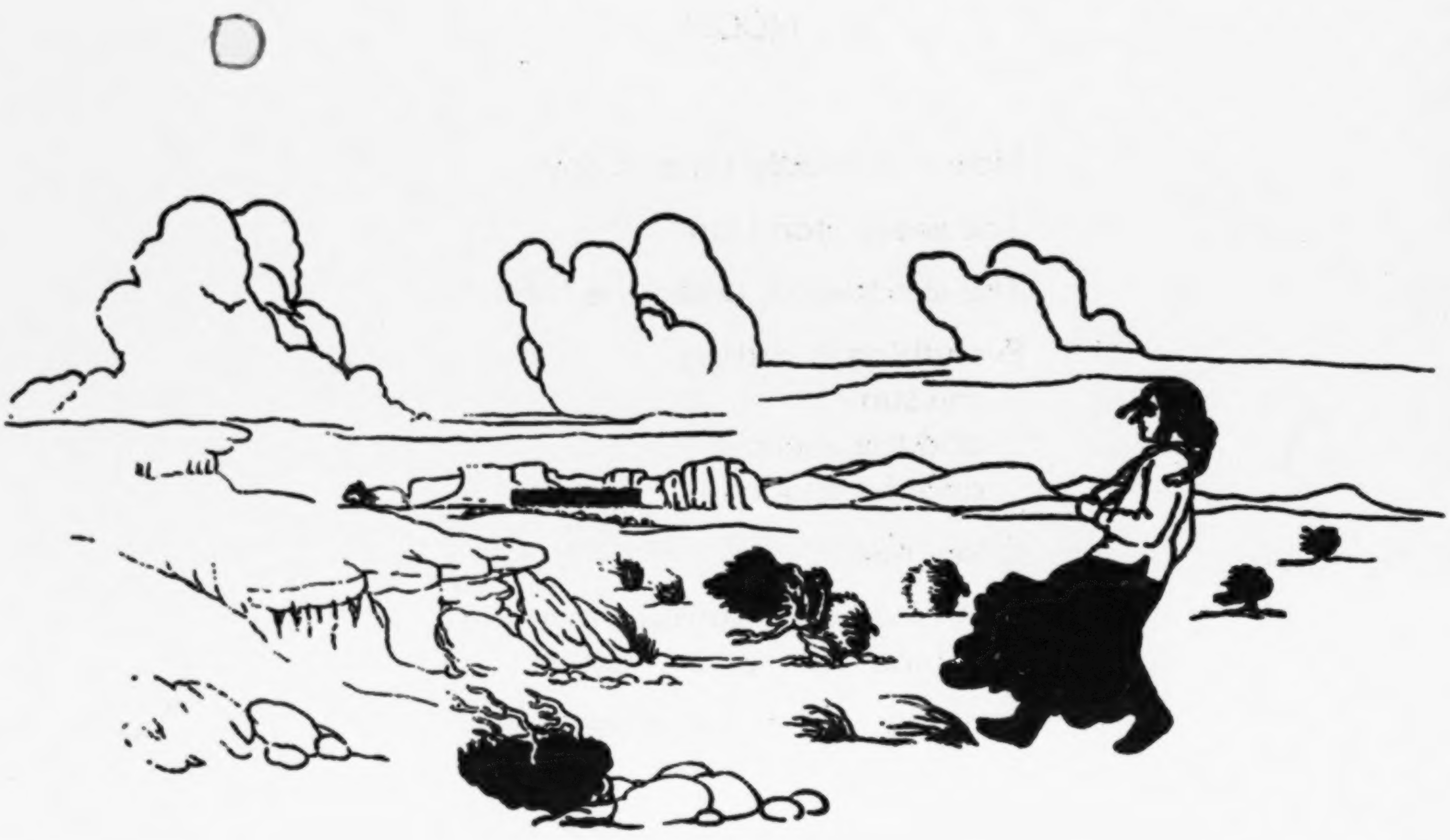
Poor tumbleweeds are frightened
because
they do not know where to go.

When the wind blows
my long skirts,
my many skirts
are in a hurry
to get to the hogan
where the wind
cannot push them.

D

They pull me along
when I am walking
and my feet
have a hard time
to keep up
with my skirts.

I want someone to tell me
if the wind is angry
or if it is playing with me
and racing with me
and my many skirts
across the sand.



## NOON

Now it is middle-time of day.

The sheep stand still.

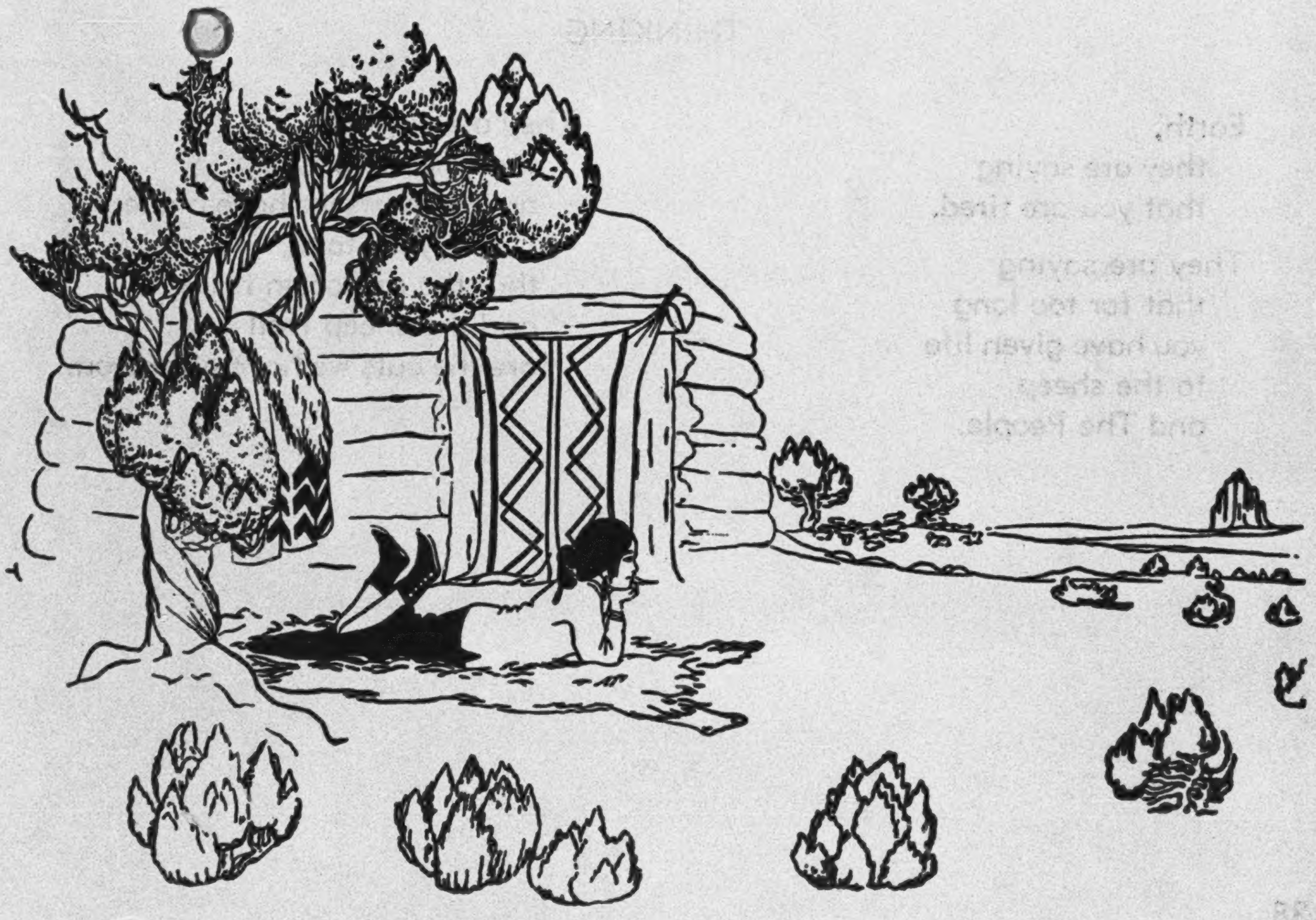
The shadows sit under the trees.

Everything is resting,
  the sun
  and the sheep
  and the shadows.

I, too, rest.

And I look at Beautiful Mountain
  behind my mother's hogan.

I am thinking about something.

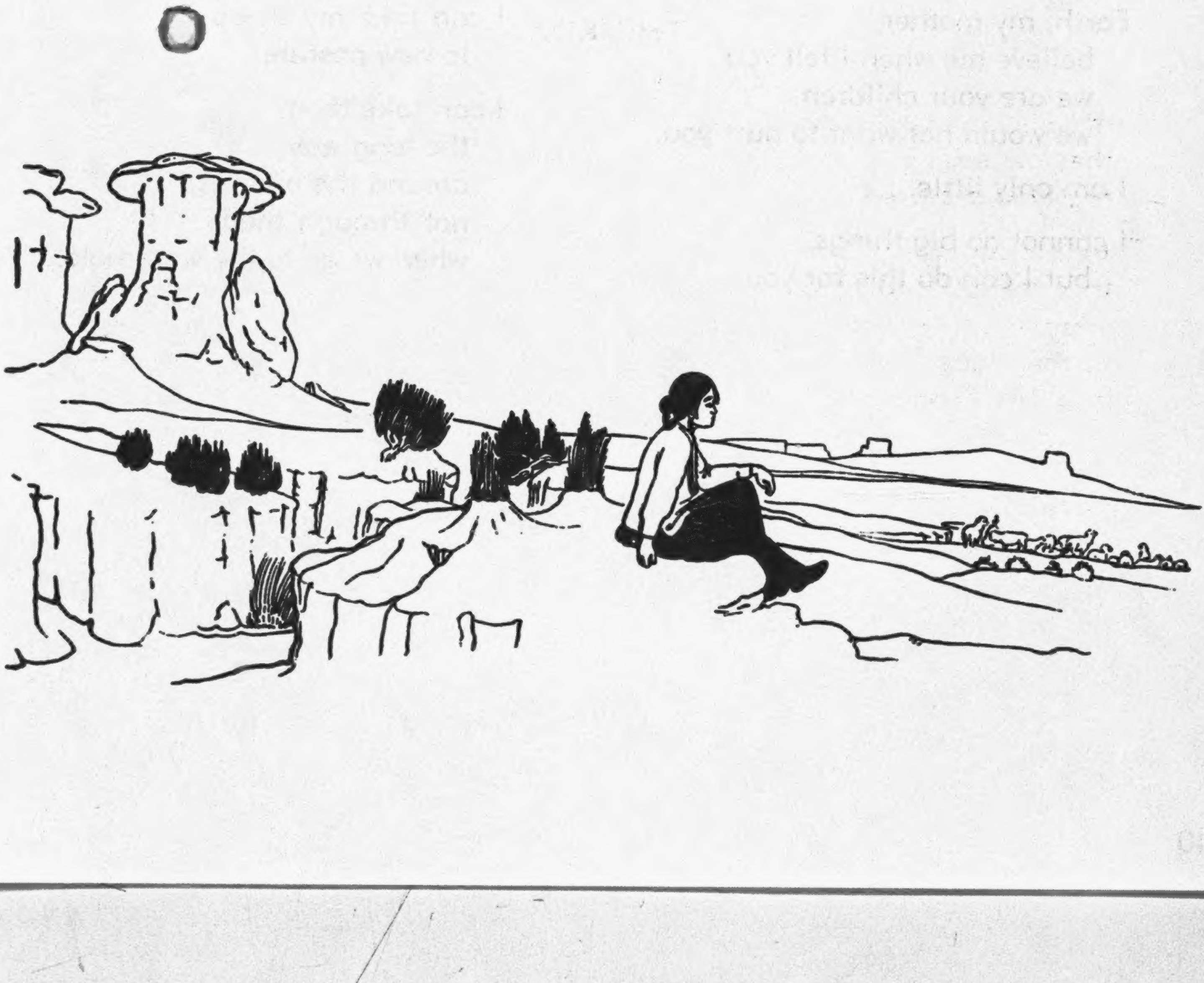


# THINKING

Earth,
they are saying
that you are tired.

They are saying
that for too long
you have given life
to the sheep
and The People.

They are saying
that the arroyos
are the hurts we have made
across your face,
that the moccasin track
and the sheep trail
are the cuts we have given you.



Earth, my mother,
believe me when I tell you
we are your children,
we would not want to hurt you.

I am only little.

I cannot do big things,
but I can do this for you.

I can take my sheep
to new pastures.

I can take them
the long way
around the arroyos,
not through them,
when we go to the waterhole.

This [illegible]y
their little feet,
their sharp pointed feet,
will not make the cuts
across your face
grow deeper.

This way
the worn pastures
can sleep a little
and grow new grass again.

I can do this
to heal your cuts,
to make you
not so tired.

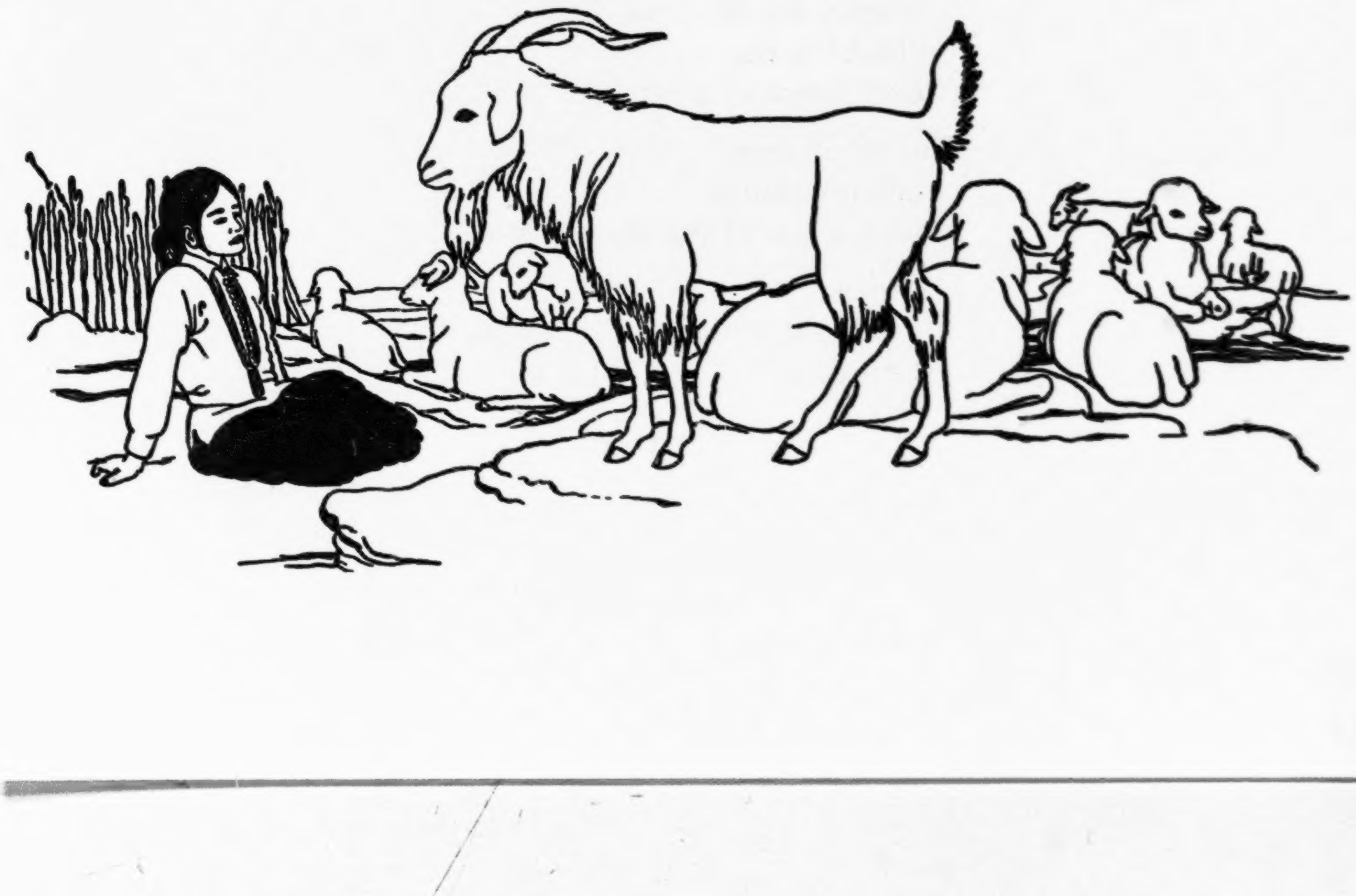
Earth, my mother,
do you understand?

## OLD GRANDFATHER GOAT

Grandfather Goat
stands on the hilltop,
shaking his whiskers,
chewing something
and looking wise.

Sometimes
when I ask him things
he looks at me
as if he knew.

Perhaps he does.

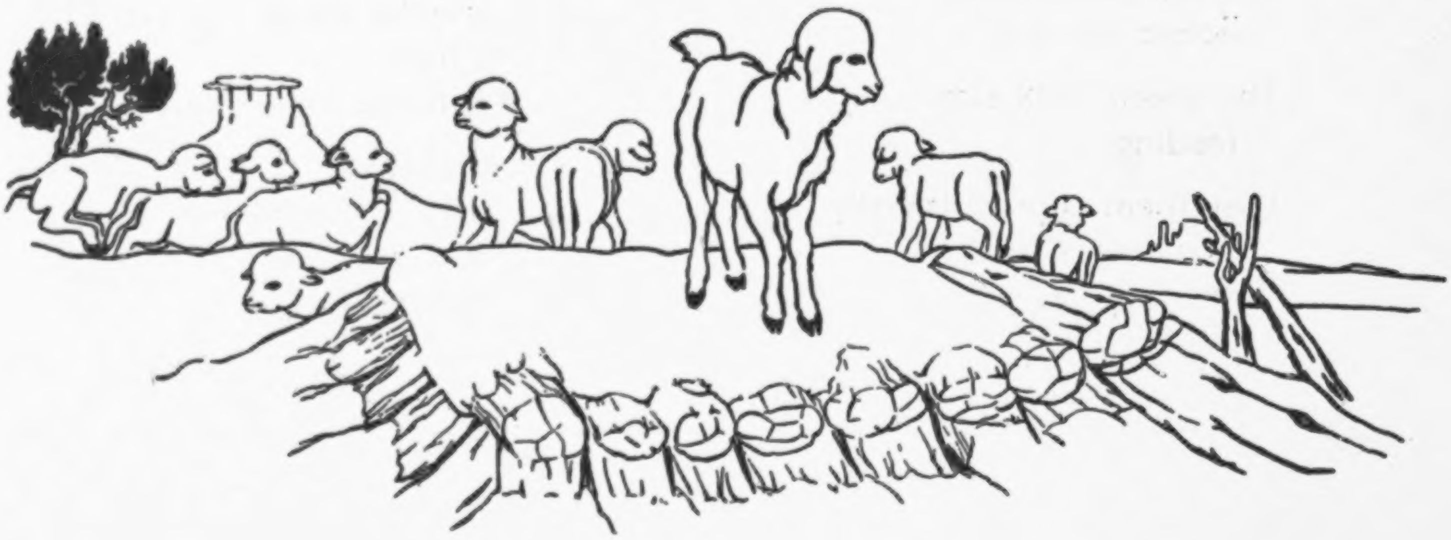


## BABY GOATS

Baby goats
always are playing,
climbing up
and jumping down.

This small one
always stands
on the top of the storehouse.

He knows
there are things to eat inside,
I think.



## AFTERNOON

Afternoon is long.

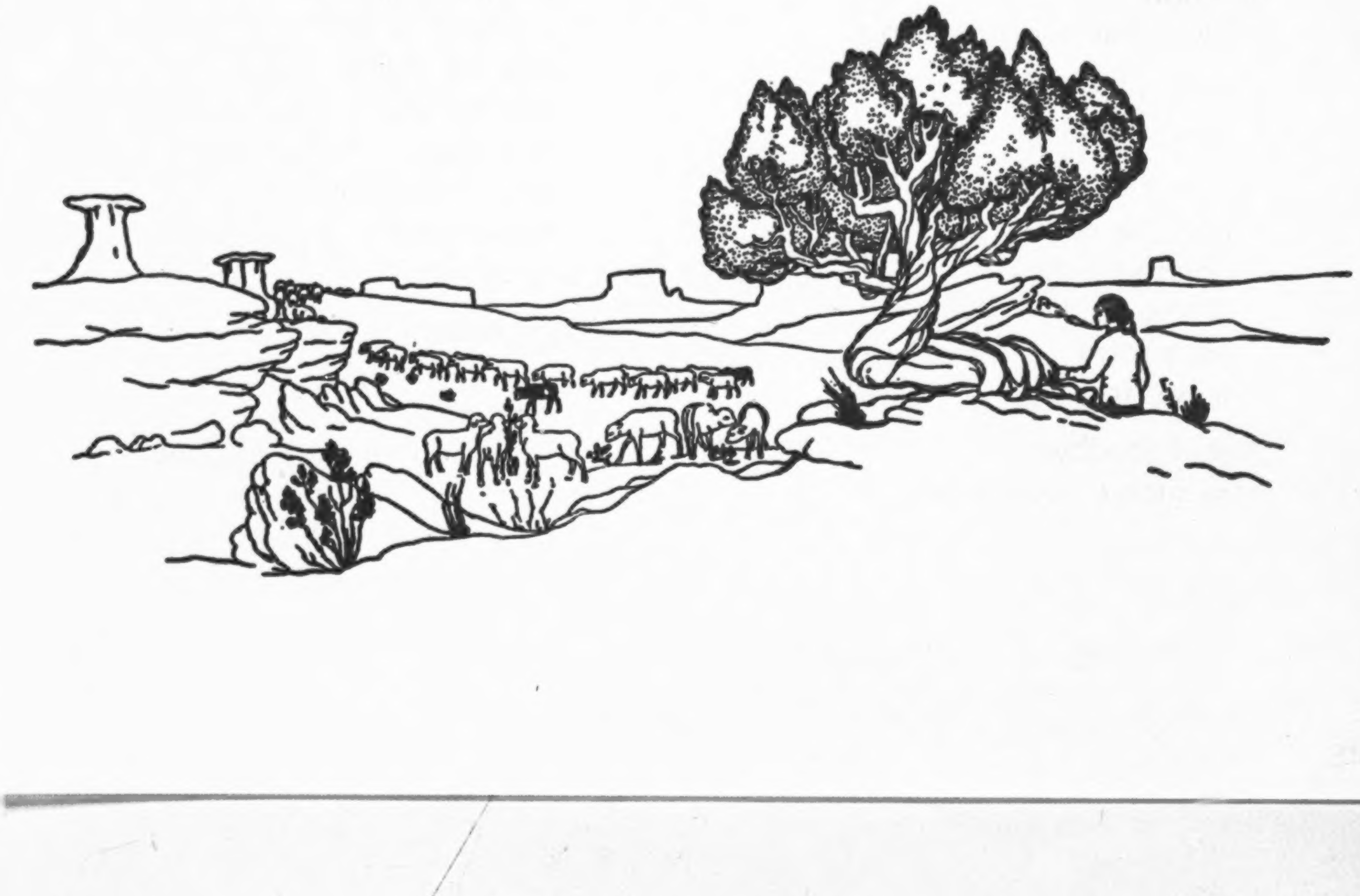
The sun goes slowly
across the sky.

The sheep walk slowly,
feeding.

I see them against the sky
in a long, slow line.

I whisper to the wind
to blow the sun
and the sheep
a little
to make them hurry.

But it blows
only the clouds
and the sand
and me.



# SUNSET

Just now
I watched the sun going.

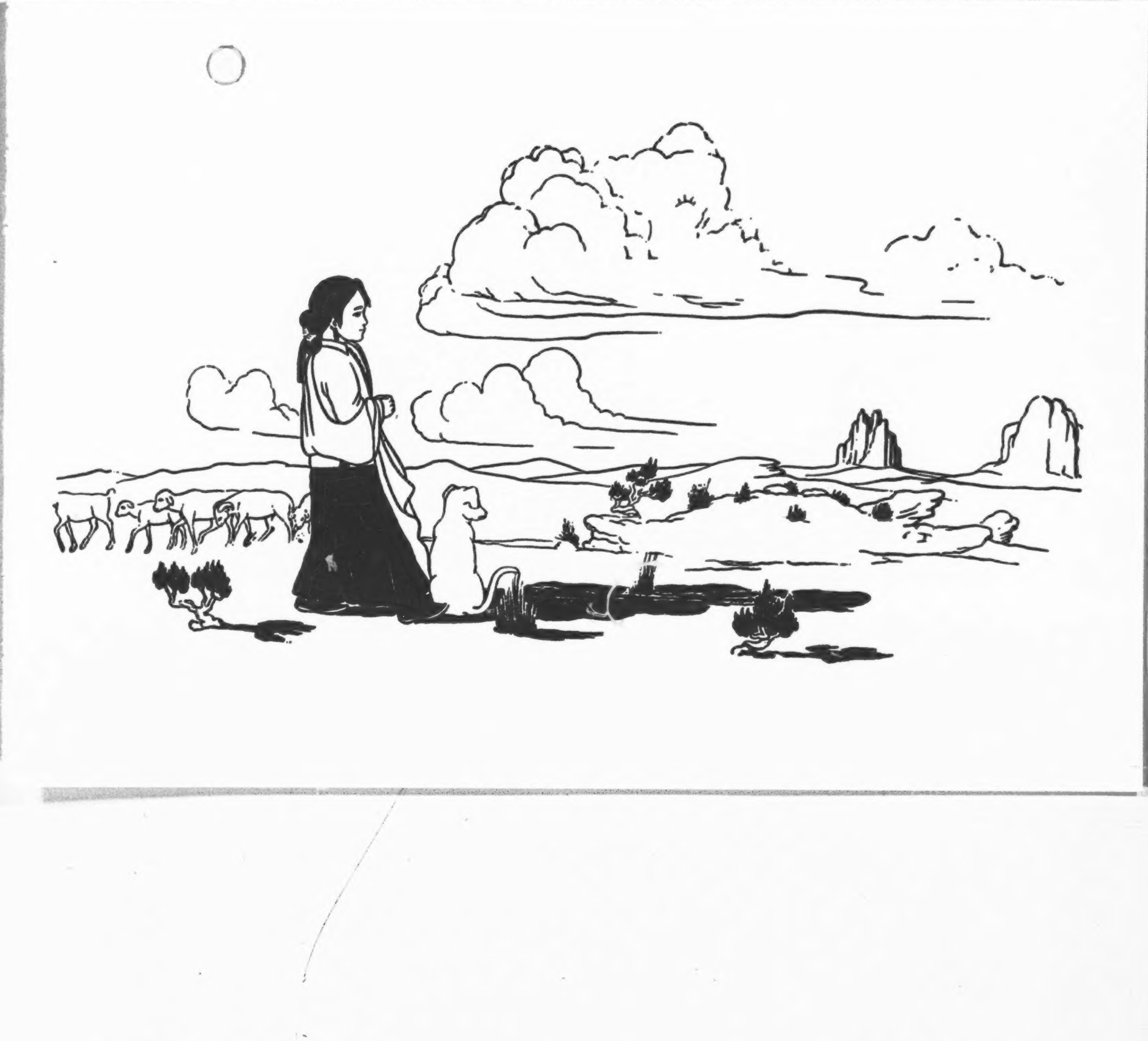
It took a long time
to say goodbye.

I think it knew
that the land
and the things
of the land
were sorry
it had to go.

It said goodbye
in such a good way.

Just for a little time
it made the sky
and the rocks
and the sand
like itself
to let them know
how it feels
to be sun.

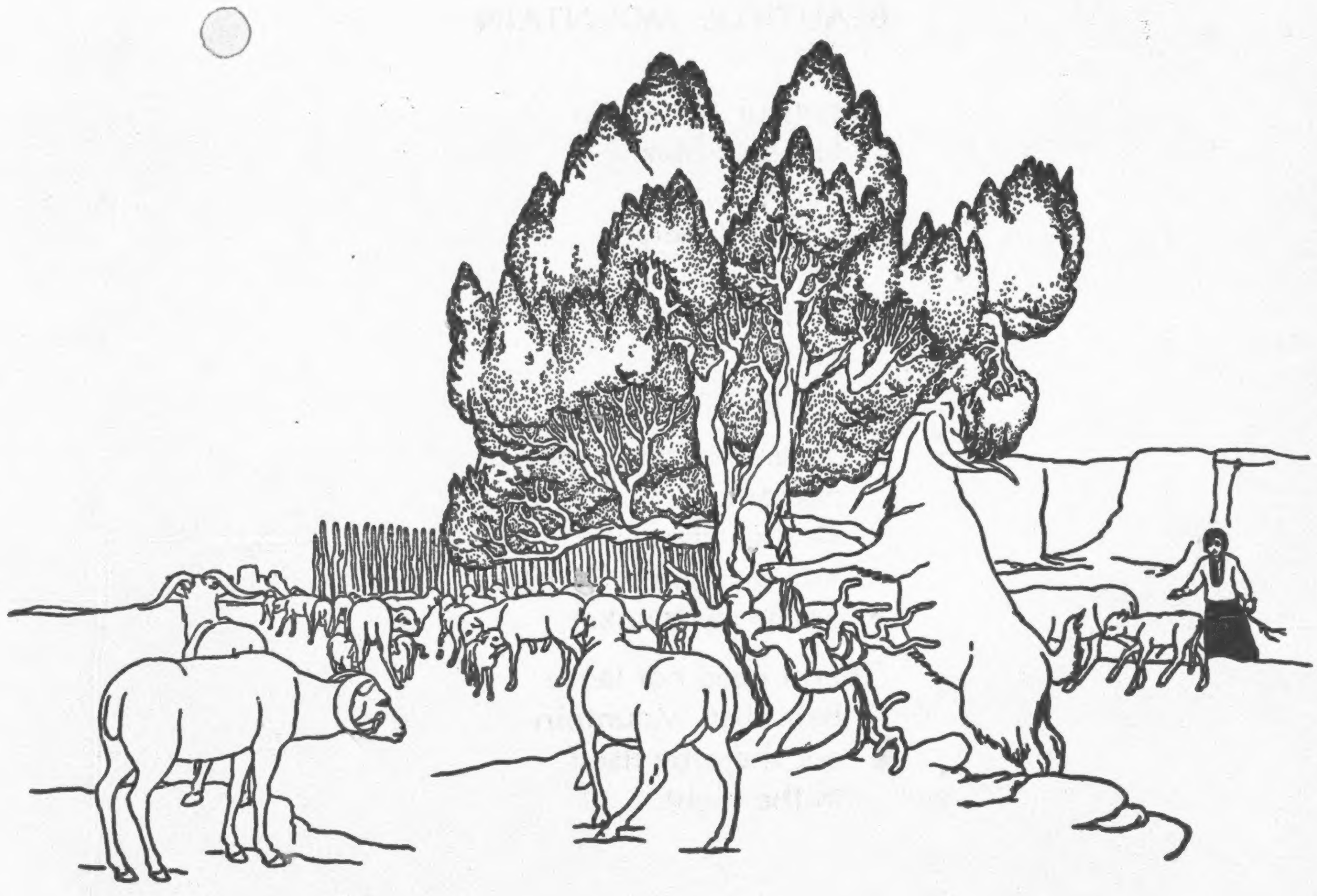
Then it went away
and all things
were still
because the sun had gone.



# GREEDY GOAT

The sheep know
  that the day is over,
  but Grandfather Goat
  stays behind
  to push his whiskers
  high up in a tree
  for one last bite.

Old Greedy
  Grandfather Goat.

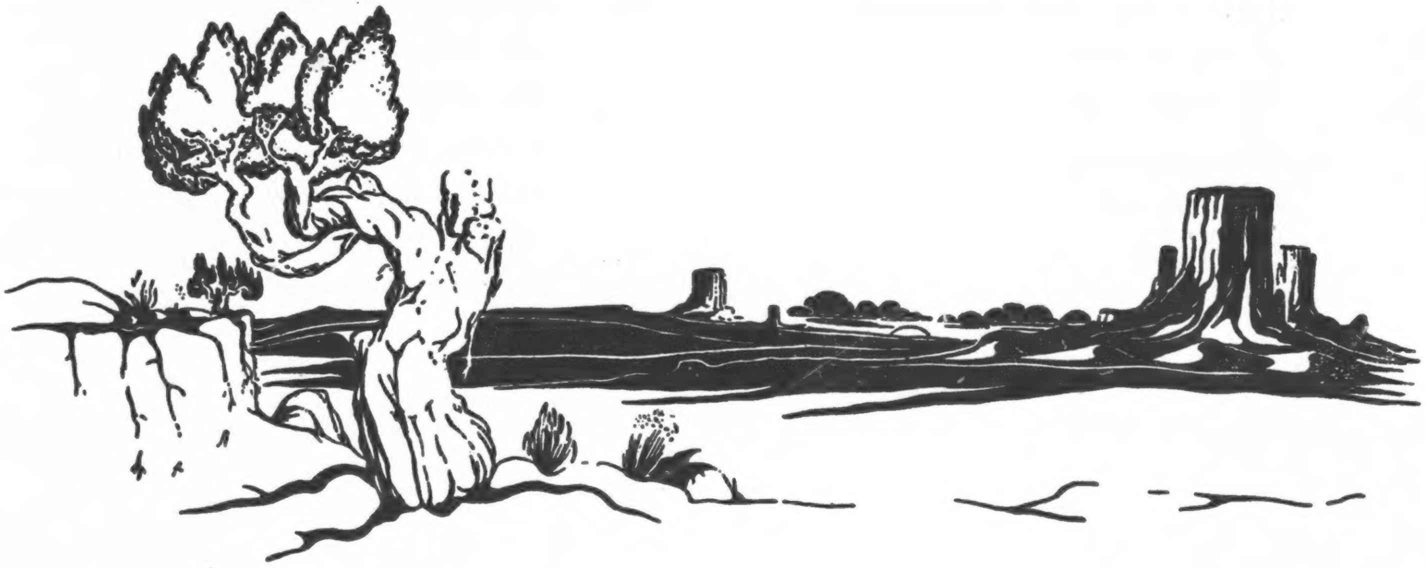


## BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAIN

Beautiful Mountain
looks so blue
and so cold
and so lonely
now that the sun
and the sheep
and I
are going.

If it were nearer to me
and small,
I could bring it
into my mother's hogan
under my blanket.

Then I need not leave
Beautiful Mountain
out there by itself
in the night.



# MEETINGS

For a long time
there have been meetings
of many men
for many days.

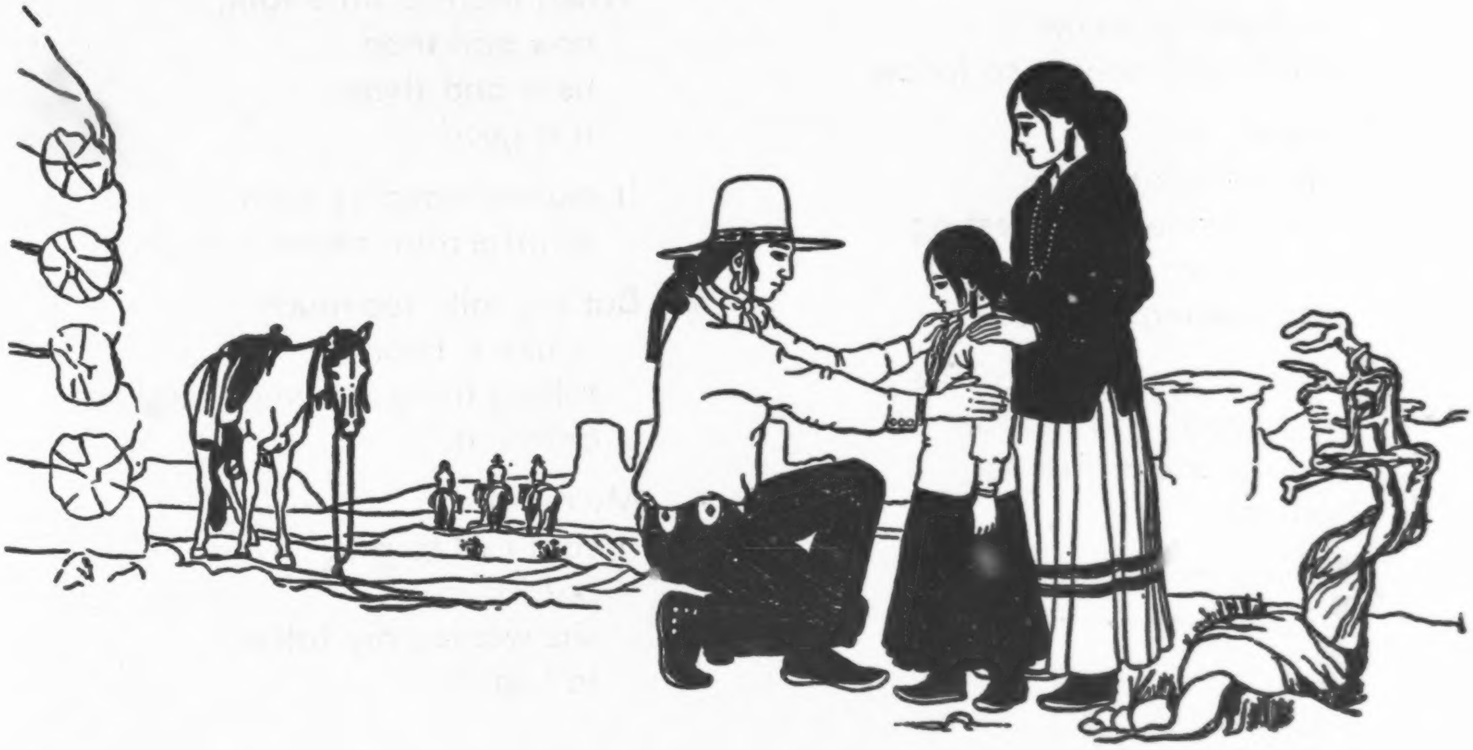
At the meetings
there is talking,
talking,
talking.

Some this way.

Some that way.

In the morning
when my father
leaves for meeting
he says to us,

"When I come here again
then I will know
if it is best
to have many sheep
or few sheep,
to use the land
or let it sleep."



But
when my father
comes home from meeting
he does not know
which talking-way to follow.

Tonight
when my father
came home from meeting
he just sat, looking
and looking.

My mother gave him coffee
and bread and mutton,
but my father just sat,
looking.

Then my mother
spoke to me.

She said,
"A meeting is like rain.

When there is little talk,
now and then,
here and there,
it is good.

It makes thoughts grow
as little rains make corn grow.

But big talk, too much,
is like a flood
taking things of long standing
before it."

My mother
said this to me,
but I think
she wanted my father
to hear it.

## GOING HOME

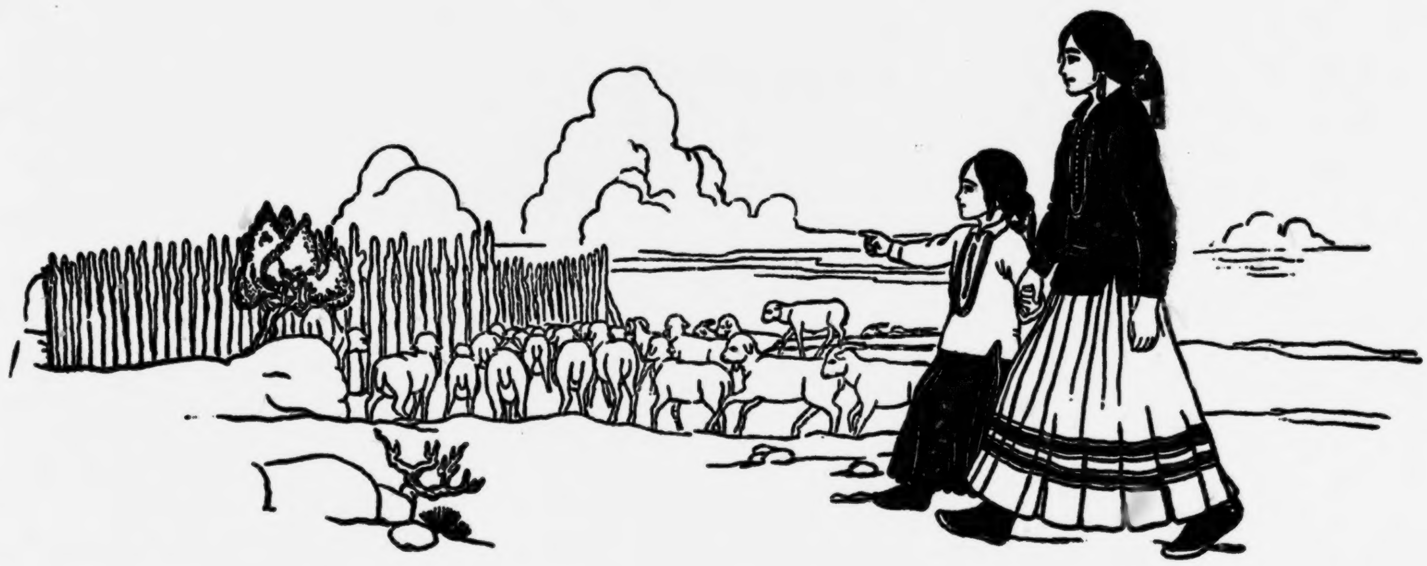
After the sun has gone,
  my mother's sheep
  and I,
  we walk together, slowly,
  to my mother's hogan
  and the corral.
Most all the day
  my mother
  from her hogan door
  has watched me
  and the sheep
  to see
  that no harm came to us.
And now
  my mother comes to meet us.
She comes to welcome us
  as if we had been gone
  a long way,
  a long time.

Sometimes
my father's singing
comes to meet us
across the sandwash.

It comes to meet us
to sing us home.

Sometimes
the smoke
from the supper fire
comes to meet us
across the dark blue
of the night sky.

For me the hogan is waiting
and the corral
waits for the sheep.

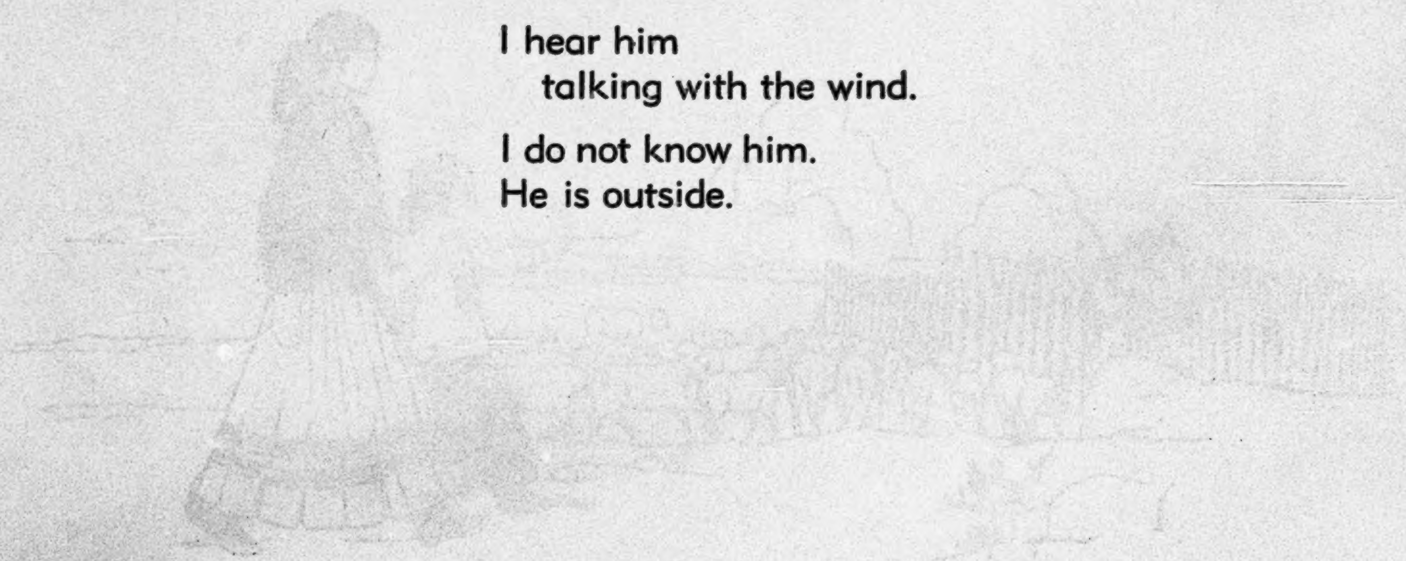


# NIGHT

Night is outside
    in his black blanket.

I hear him
    talking with the wind.

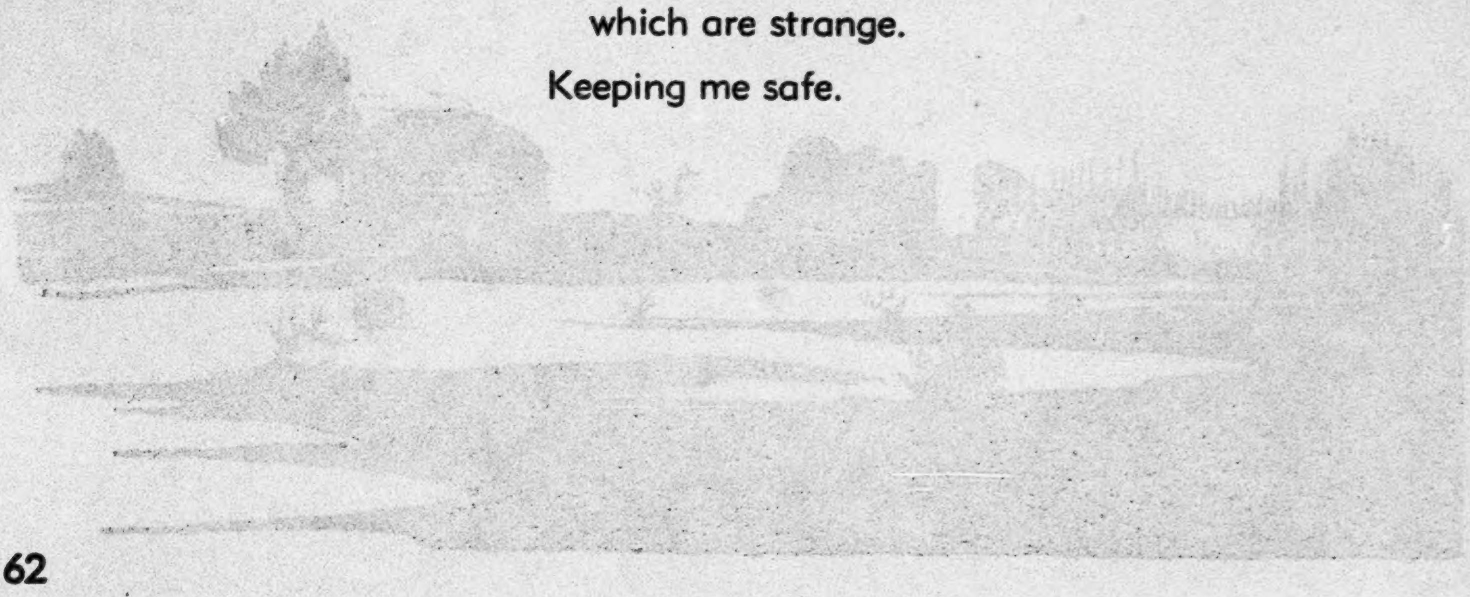
I do not know him.
He is outside.

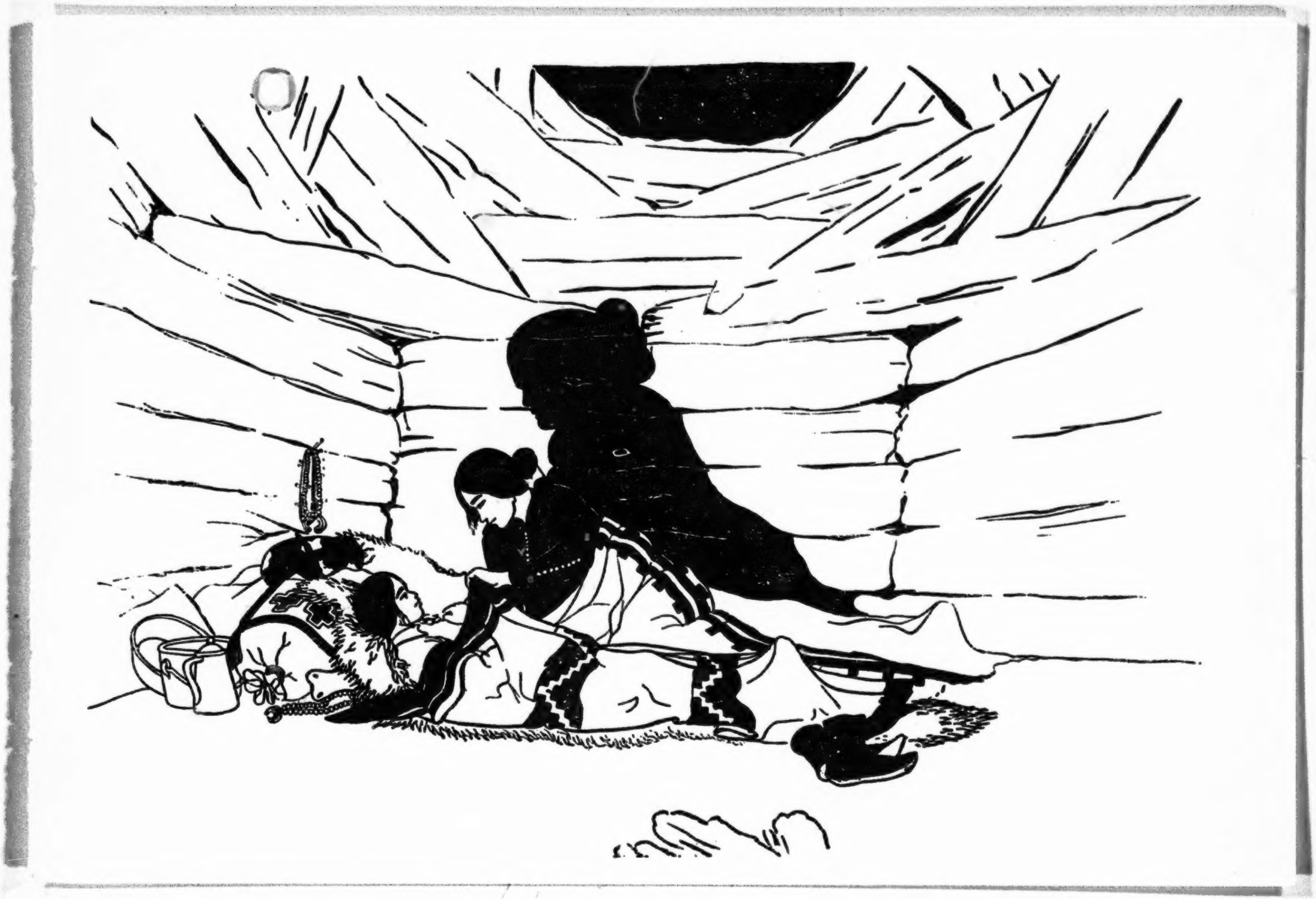


I am here
in my mother's hogan
warm in my sheepskin
close to my mother.

The things I know
are around me
like a blanket,
keeping me safe
from those things
which are strange.

Keeping me safe.





# LITTLE HERDER IN SUMMER

## ANN CLARK

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# LITTLE HERDER IN SUMMER

## ANN CLARK

ILLUSTRATED BY

HOKE DENETSOSIE

A Publication of the Branch of Education
Bureau of Indian Affairs
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### TODAY

Today
we leave my mother's hogan,
my mother's winter hogan.

We leave the shelter of its
rounded walls.

We leave its friendly center fire.

We drive our sheep to the mountains.

For the sheep,
there is grass and shade
and water,
flowing water
and water standing still,
in the mountains.

There is no wind.

There is no sand
up there.

## PACKING

My mother's possessions
we tie on the pack horses,
her loom parts
and her wool yarns,
her cooking pots,
her blanket
and my blanket
and the water jug,
white sacks filled with food,
cans of food,
cornmeal and wheat flour,
coffee and sugar.

My mother's possessions,
we tie them all on the
pack horses.

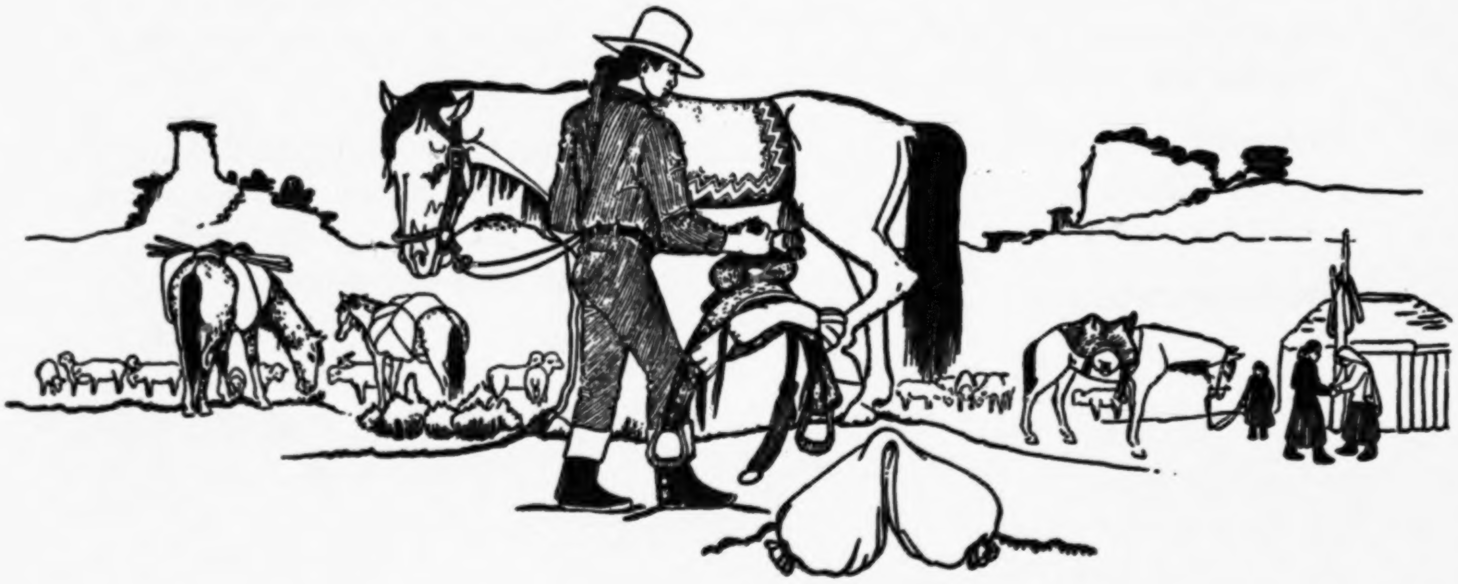
The packs must be steady.

The ropes must be tight.

The knots must be stro[illegible].

I cannot pack the horses,
I am too little,
but I can bring the possessions
to my father and my uncle.

I am big enough for that.



# GOODBYE TO MY HOGAN

My mother's hogan,
   I feel safe
   with your rounded walls
   about me.

But now I must leave you.
   I must leave your fire
   and your door.

The sheep need me.

I must go with them
   to a place they know,
   but that is strange to me.

I put my moccasins,
   my precious moccasins,
   by your fireplace, my hogan,
   so you will not be lonely
   while I am gone.

## GOODBYE

Land
around my mother's hogan
and sheep trail
and arroyo
and waterhole,
sleep in the sun
this summer.

Rest well
for my sheep
will not be here
to deepen the trail and arroyo
with their little sharp feet.

They will not be here
to eat the short grass,
to drink the stored water.

Sleep,
rest well,
and be ready for our return.

## READY TO GO

My mother scatters the ashes
from her cooking fire.

She sweeps the hogan floor
with her rabbit-brush broom.

My father lays the bough
across the door
to show that we have gone.

The dogs bark.

They run around the sheep corral
telling the sheep
we are ready to go.

The young corn in the field
hang their tasseled heads.

Young corn,
my grandmother is staying
at home.

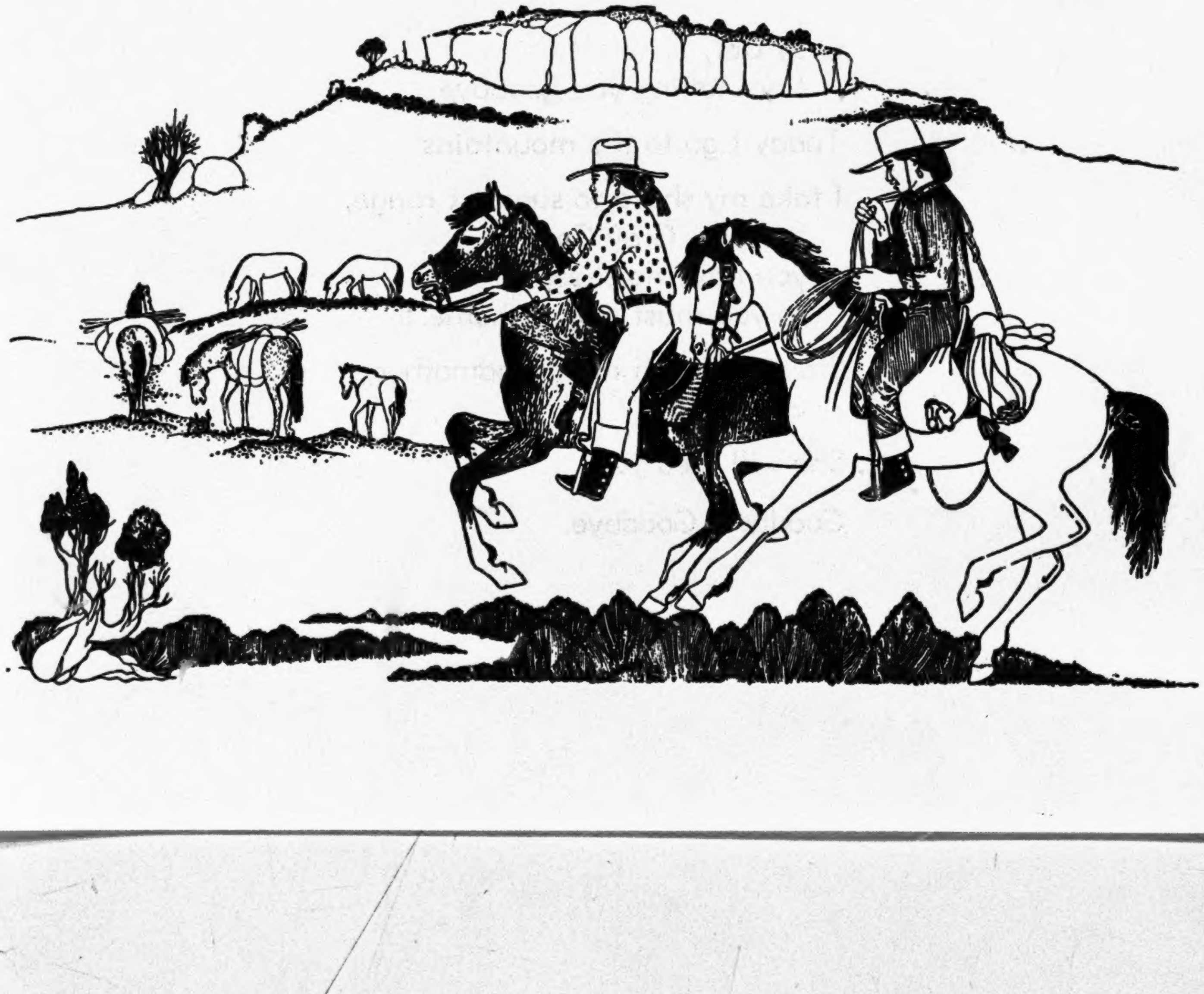
She will take care of you.

My father mounts his horse.

He drives the pack horses before him.

My uncle mounts his horse

They ride away together,
singing,
across the empty sand.



# GOODBYE GRAY CAT

Gray Cat,
  I am telling you goodbye.

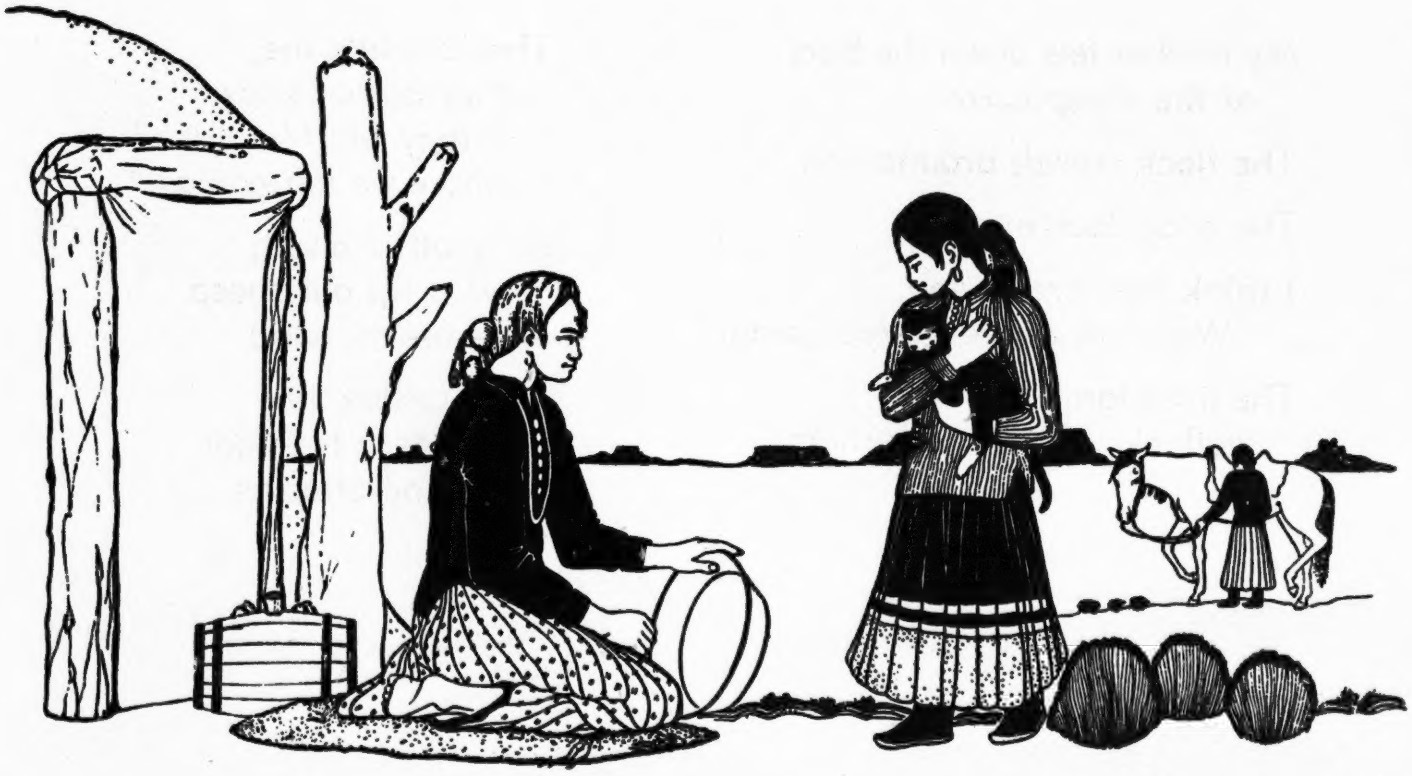
Today I go to the mountains.

I take my sheep to summer range,
  but you, Gray Cat,
  you have no sheep
  so you must stay at home.

Stay here with my grandmother,
  Gray Cat.

She will feed you.

Goodbye, Goodbye.



# ACROSS THE SAND

My mother lets down the bars
of the sheep corral.

The flock crowds around her.

The goats look at me.

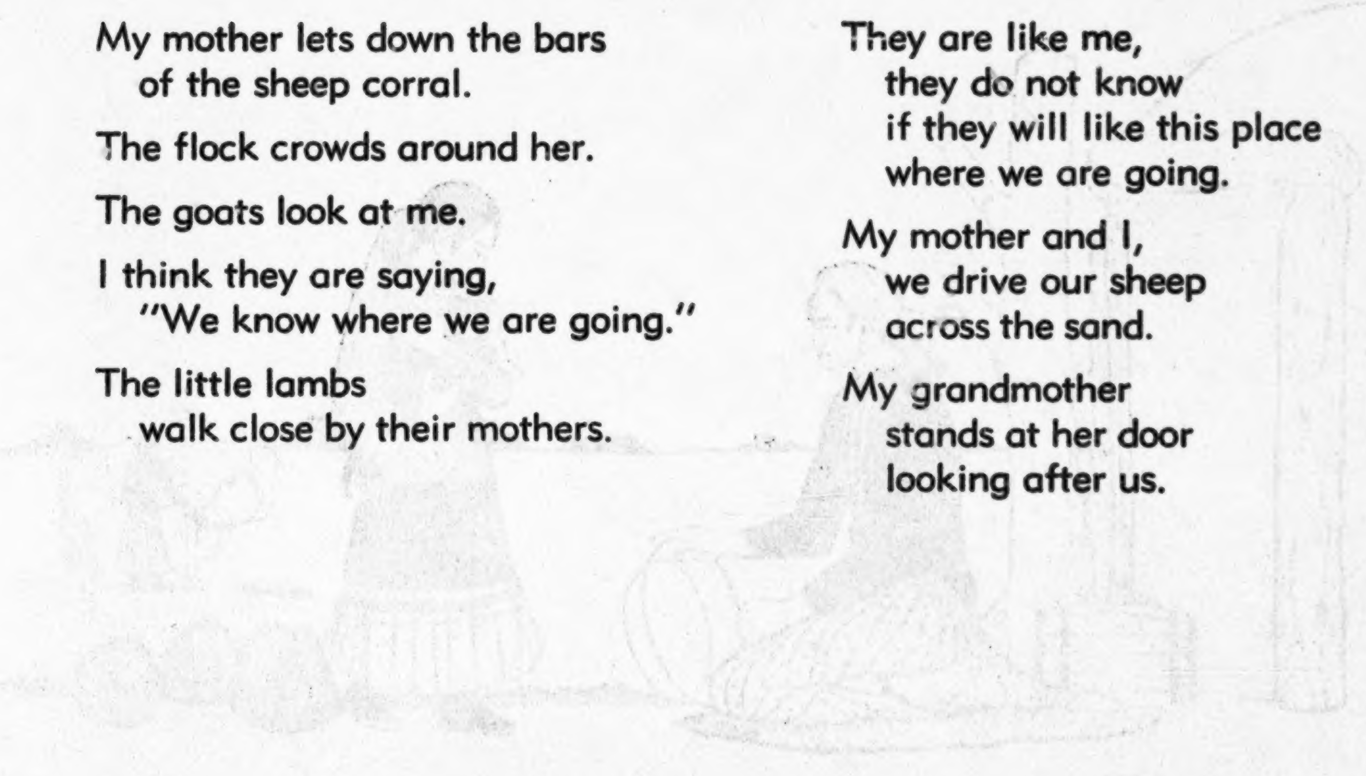
I think they are saying,
"We know where we are going."

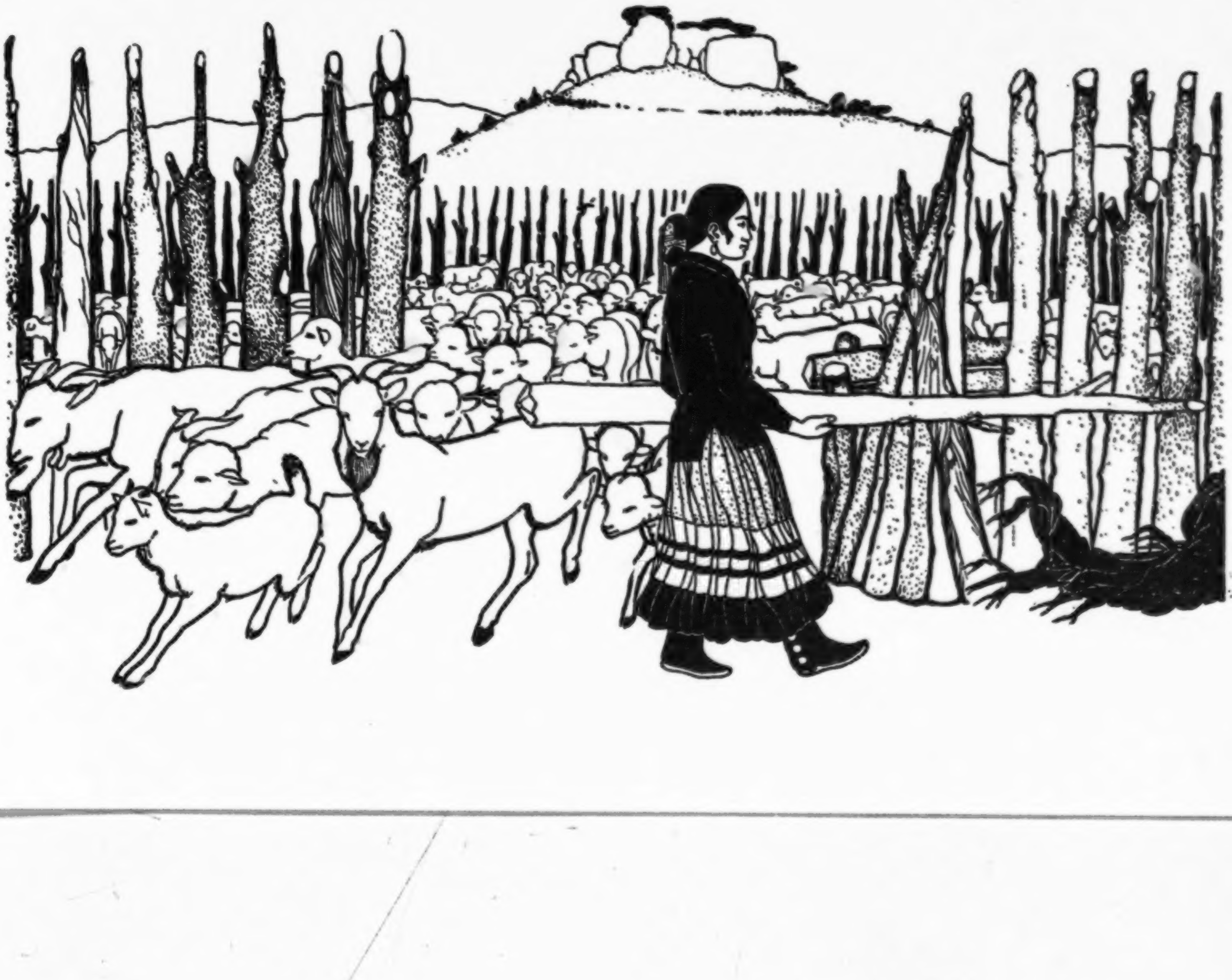
The little lambs
walk close by their mothers.

They are like me,
they do not know
if they will like this place
where we are going.

My mother and I,
we drive our sheep
across the sand.

My grandmother
stands at her door
looking after us.





# GOODBYE TO GRANDMOTHER

My grandmother,
   my little grandmother,
   now I am leaving you.

Last year I was too small
   to go to the mountains.

I stayed with you,
   but this year I am big,
   I am almost tall
   so I must help drive the sheep
   to summer range.

My grandmother,
   my little grandmother,
   do not be lonely.
I will come back again.

# RIDING

Riding,
riding,
riding on my horse
to herd the sheep
across the yellow sand.

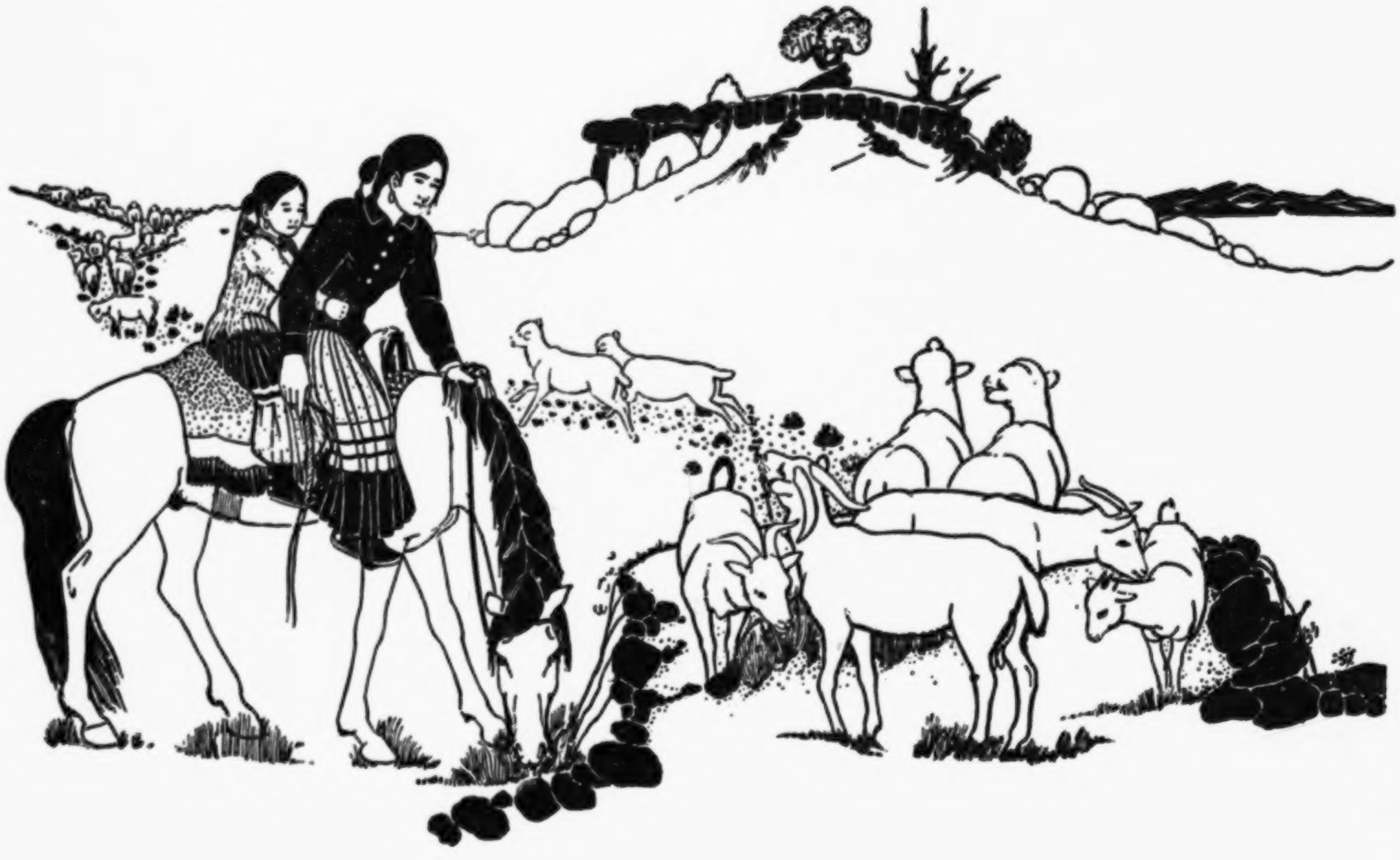
Yellow sand is around me.

Yellow sun is above me.

I ride in the middle
of a sand and sun-filled world.

Riding,
riding,
riding on my horse
to herd the sheep
across the yellow sand.

Sun heat
and sheep smell
and sand dust
wrap around me
like a blanket
as I ride through the sand
with my sheep.



## NOON IN THE SAGEBRUSH

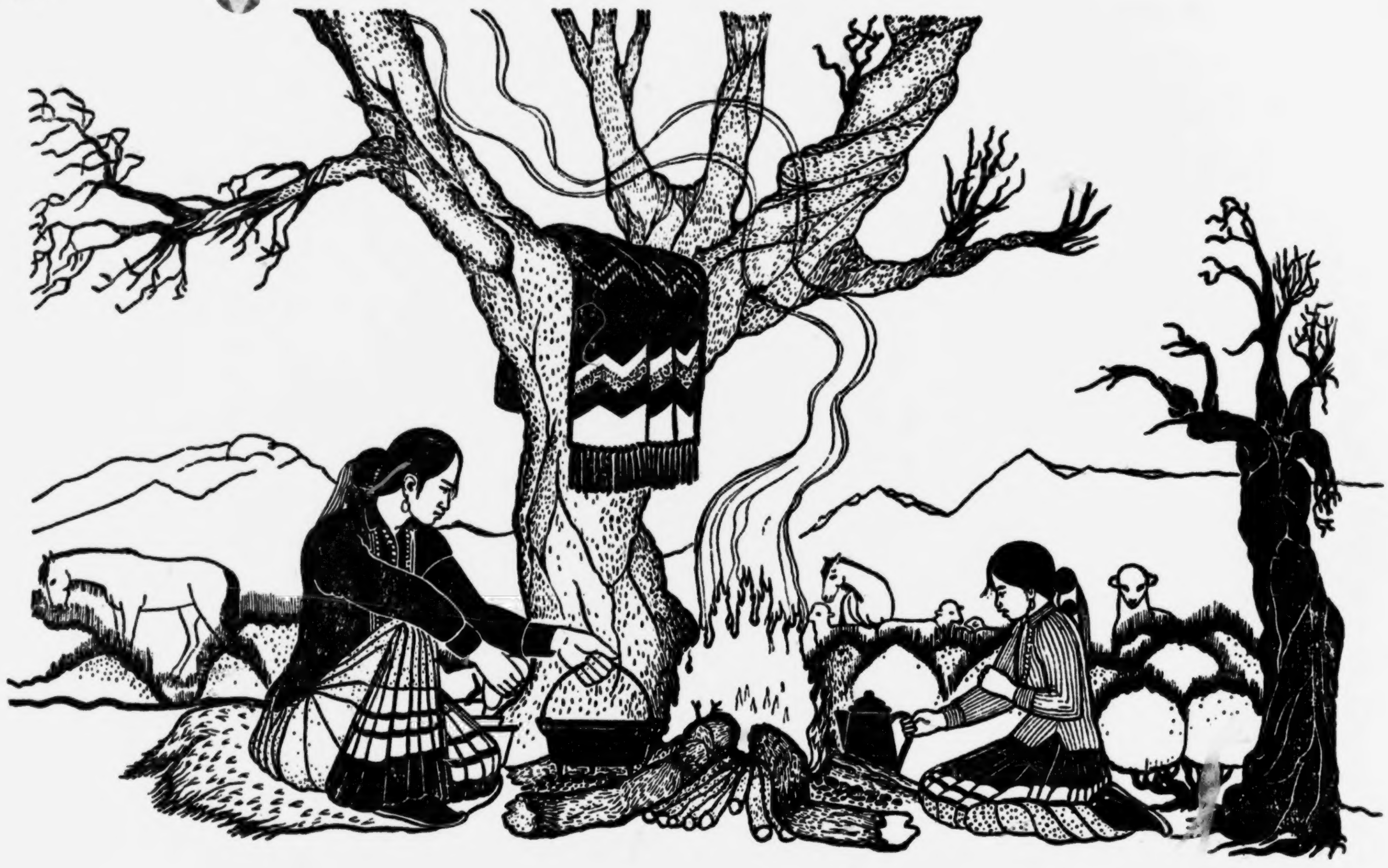
At noon
   we reach the sagebrush flats.

Gray-green sagebrush scents the air.

Gray-green sagebrush softens
   the yellows of the land.

My mother makes a little fire
   no bigger than her coffee pot.

Food is good
   and rest is good
  at noon
   in the sagebrush.



# NIGHT CAMP

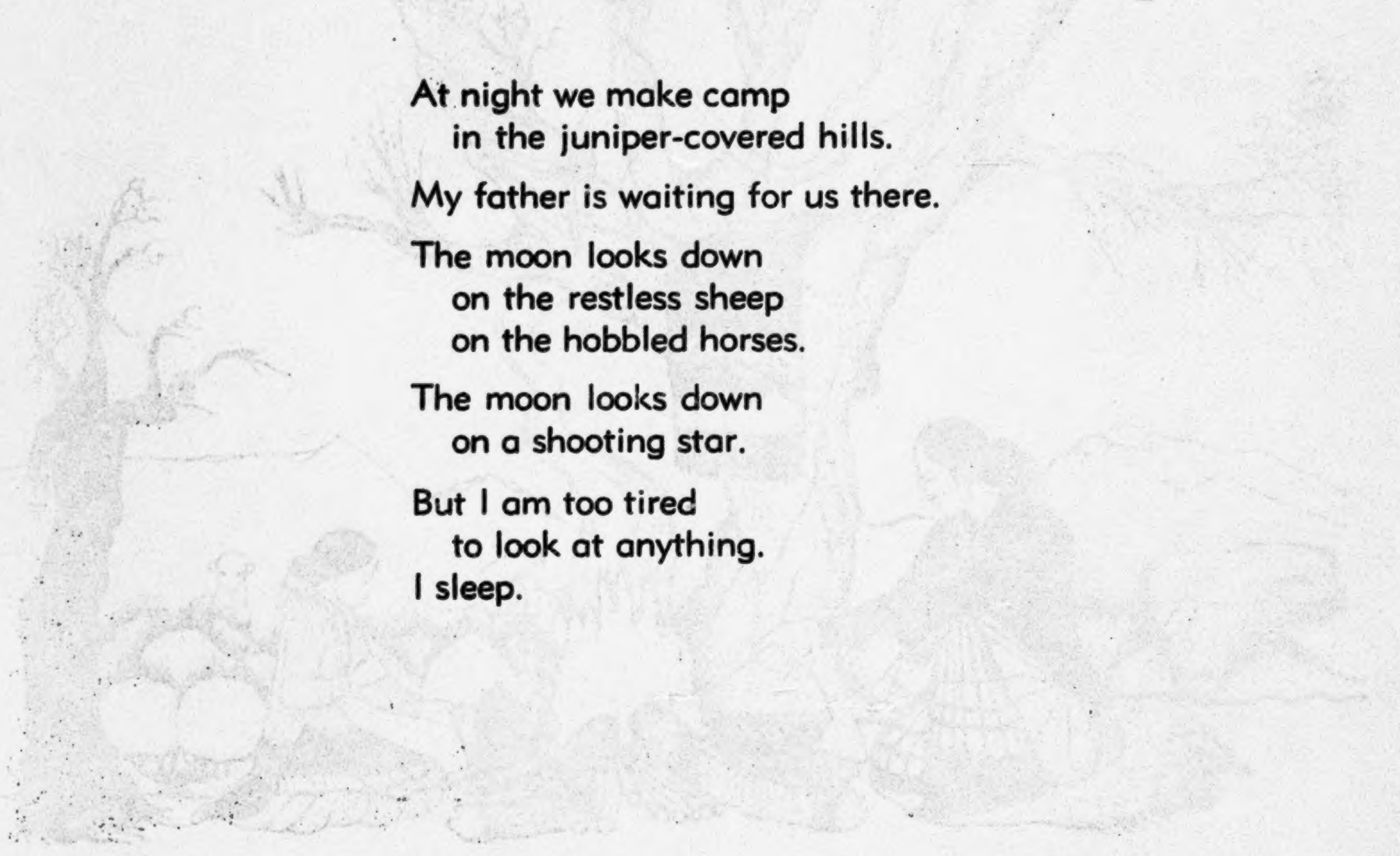
At night we make camp
   in the juniper-covered hills.

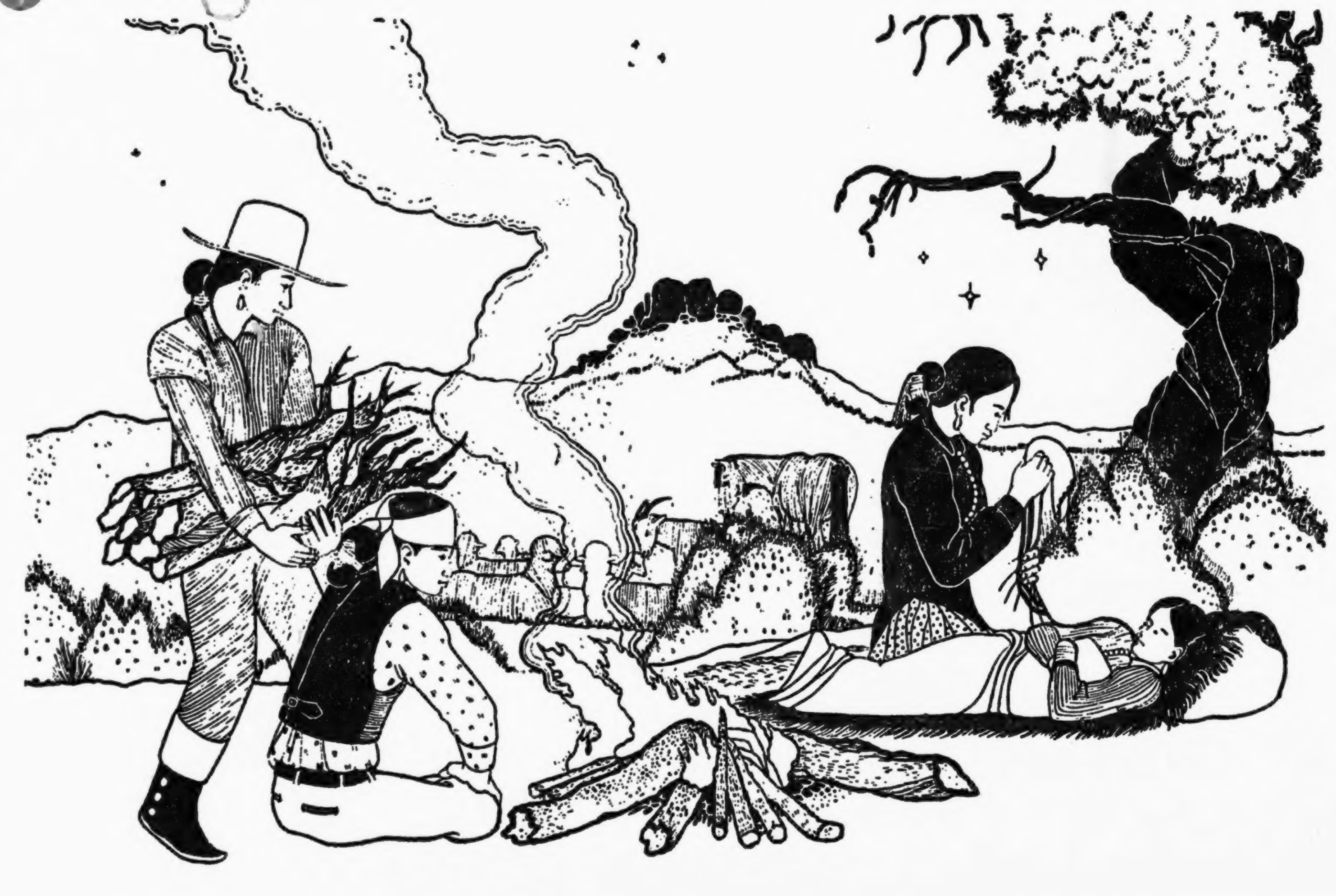
My father is waiting for us there.

The moon looks down
   on the restless sheep
   on the hobbled horses.

The moon looks down
   on a shooting star.

But I am too tired
   to look at anything.
I sleep.





## UP THE TRAIL

Morning sunrise sees us climbing
up and up
on the mountain trail.

There are pine trees
standing straight and tall.

Brown pine needles
and green grass
cover the ground.

Shadows play with the sunlight.
There is no yellow sand.

The sheep hurry upward,
climbing and pushing
in the narrow trail.

I ride after the sheep.

My horse breathes fast.

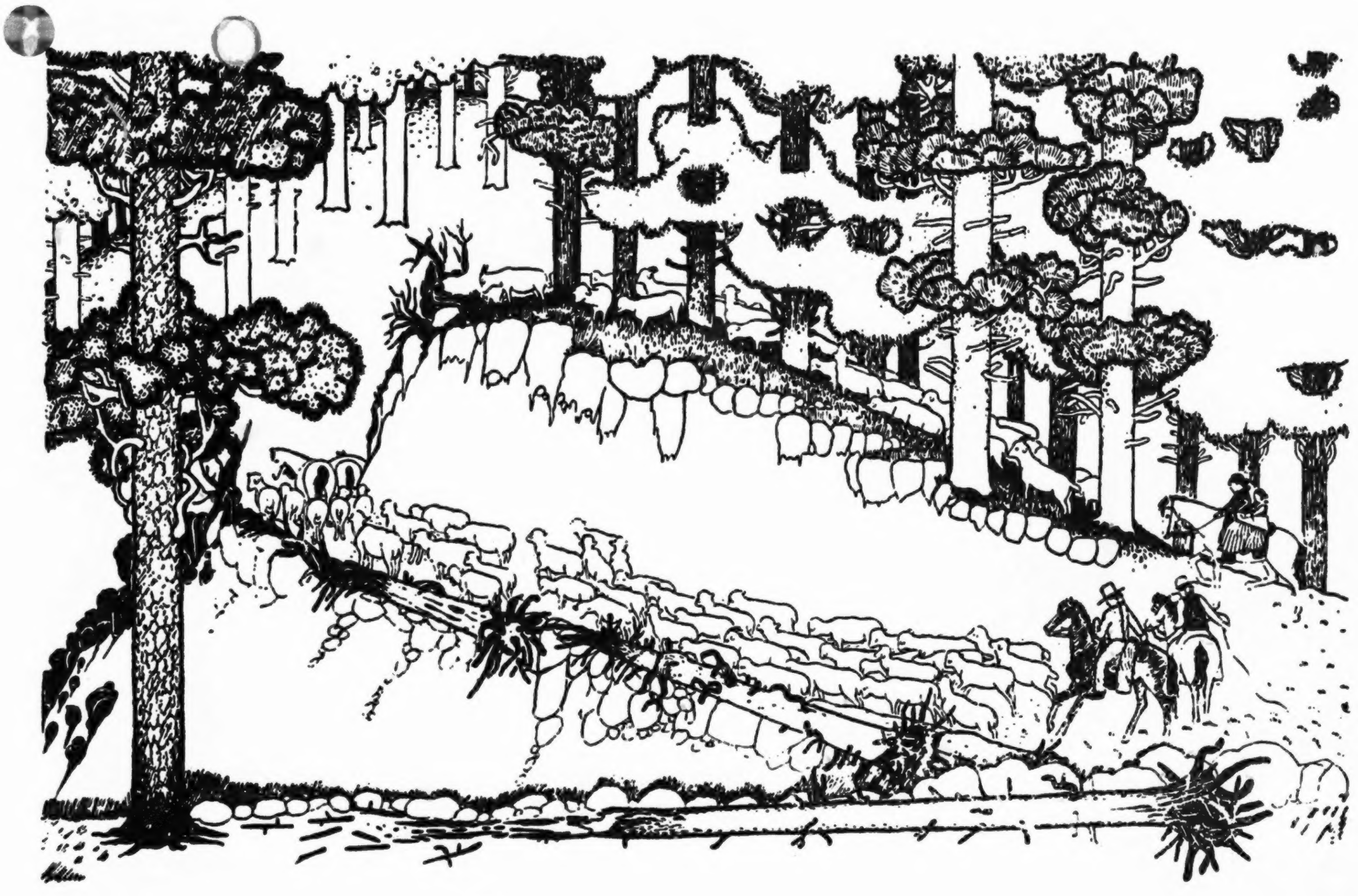
His feet stumble
in the narrow trail.

All day long
the sheep climb upward.

They want to eat
and I am hungry, too,
but my mother says,
"No."

All day long we ride
to herd the sheep.

Night is almost with us
when we reach the top.



## SUMMER RANGE

Summer range in the mountains
  is on a high mesa,
  a steep, high mesa,
  a flat-topped mesa,
  with tall-growing pine trees,
  with short-growing green grass,
  with little, winding rivers
  and rain-filled lakes.

This is summer range for our sheep.

## THE LAKE

Between the trees
  I see water standing
  in a bowl of green rushes.

The water is quiet.

It is still
  and blue
  and cold.

It is a lake
  with land all around it.

It is a lake.

I see colored fish
  beneath the water
  swimming in a rainbow line.

I throw stones into the lake.

The water pushes back in circles
  to take the stones.

The dogs swim far out
  into the cold waters.

They are thirsty and hot.

The sheep drink
long and steadily.

They stand in the shallow water
at the edges of the lake.

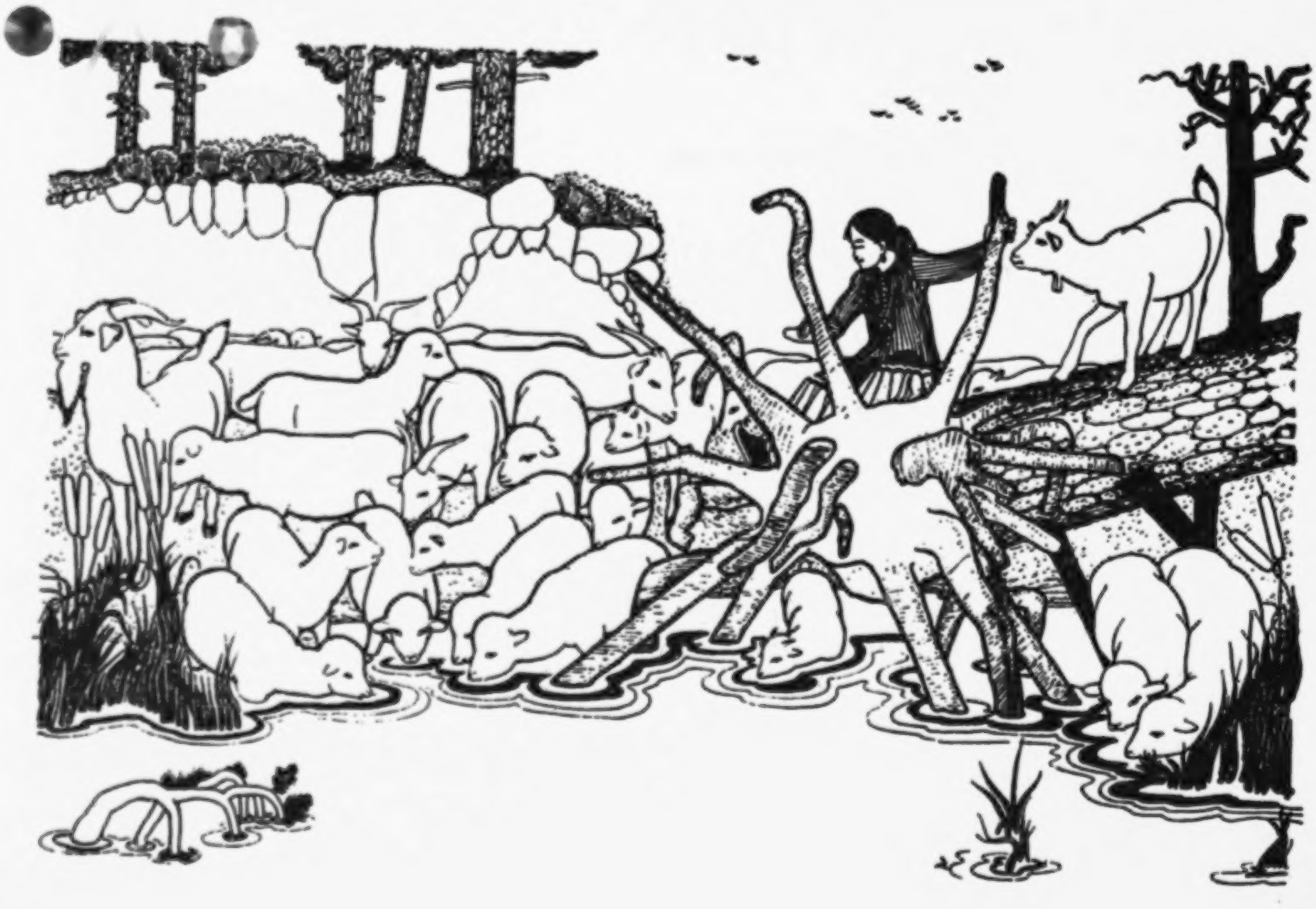
Their little pointed feet
dig deep into the mud
of the lake banks.

I have never seen a lake before.

Gentle rain pools I have seen
and angry flood waters,
but never before
a still, blue lake.

It is beautiful.

A lake is beautiful.



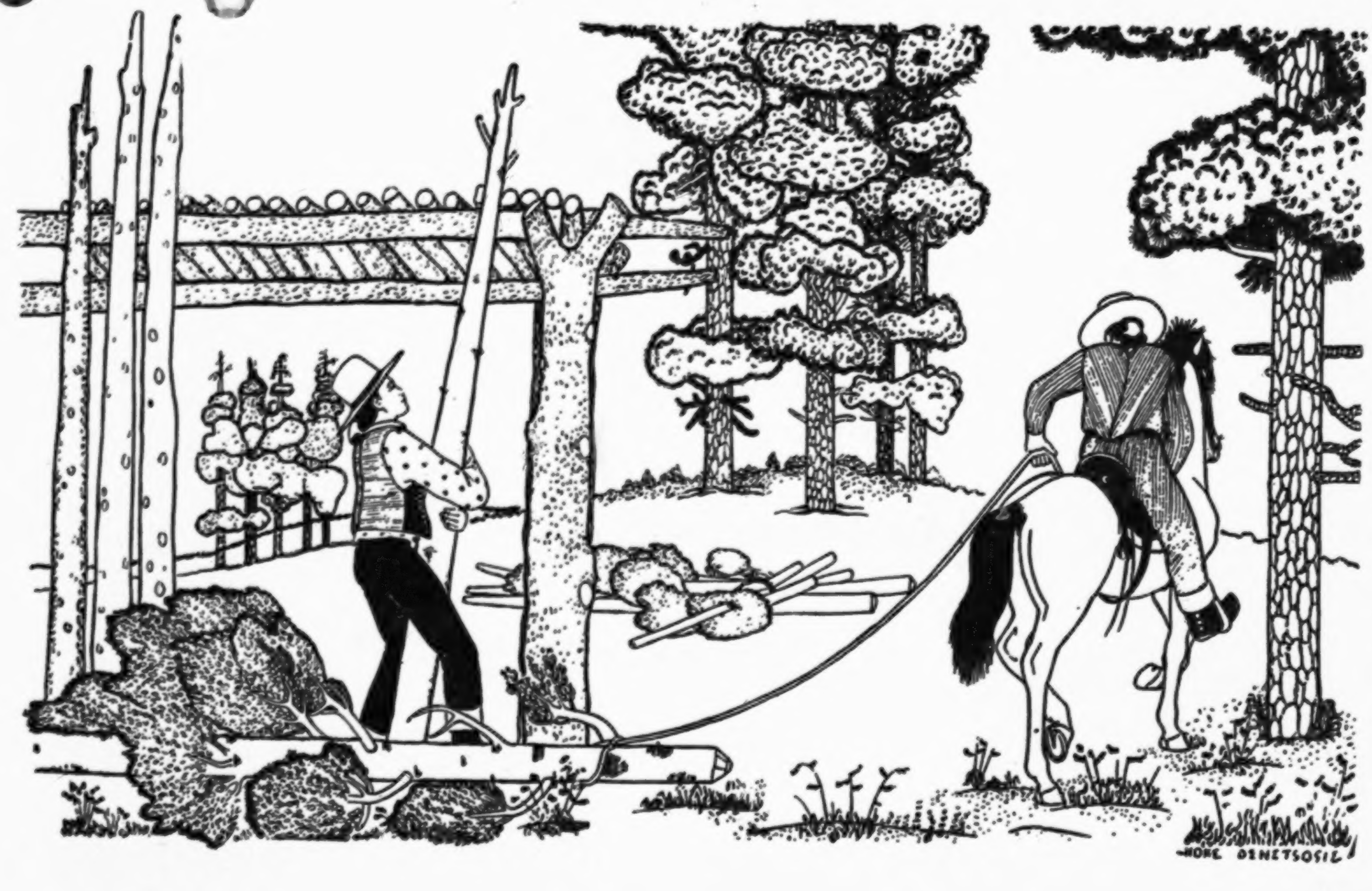
# SHELTER

Beneath the trees
I see our summer shelter.

My father and my uncle
have made a shade
to shelter us from night rains
and from the cold
of near by snow peaks.

They have made us a shade
of cottonwood boughs
and juniper bark.

It has the clean smell
that trees give.

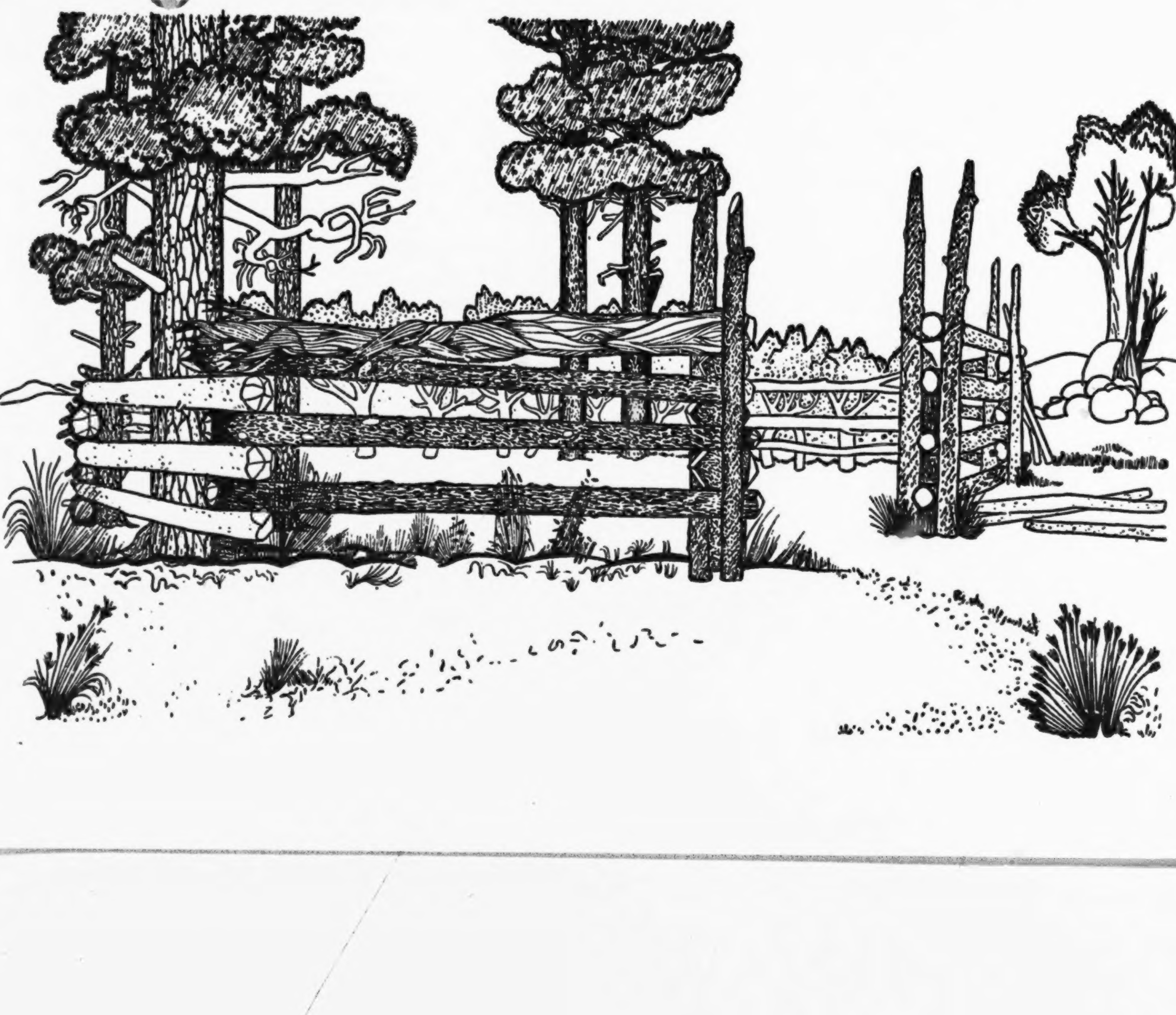

HOKE DENETSOSIE

# THE SHEEP CORRAL

My father and my uncle
made a sheep corral
while they were waiting
for the sheep and for us
to come up the trail.

They made the sheep corral
of branches,
a circle of branches,
a circle of dark-colored boughs.

The sheep stay safe
in their corral tonight
and I sleep
beneath the cottonwood shade.



## DAWN

This morning
  when I opened my eyes from
  sleeping I could not remember
  what place this is.

I thought I was in
  my mother's winter hogan.

Now I remember.

This is summer camp.

Tall trees stretch above me.

In the darkness
  they look blacker than the night.

As I lie here,
  safe and warm beneath
  my blanket,
  all around me turns to gray mist,
  all around me turns to silver.

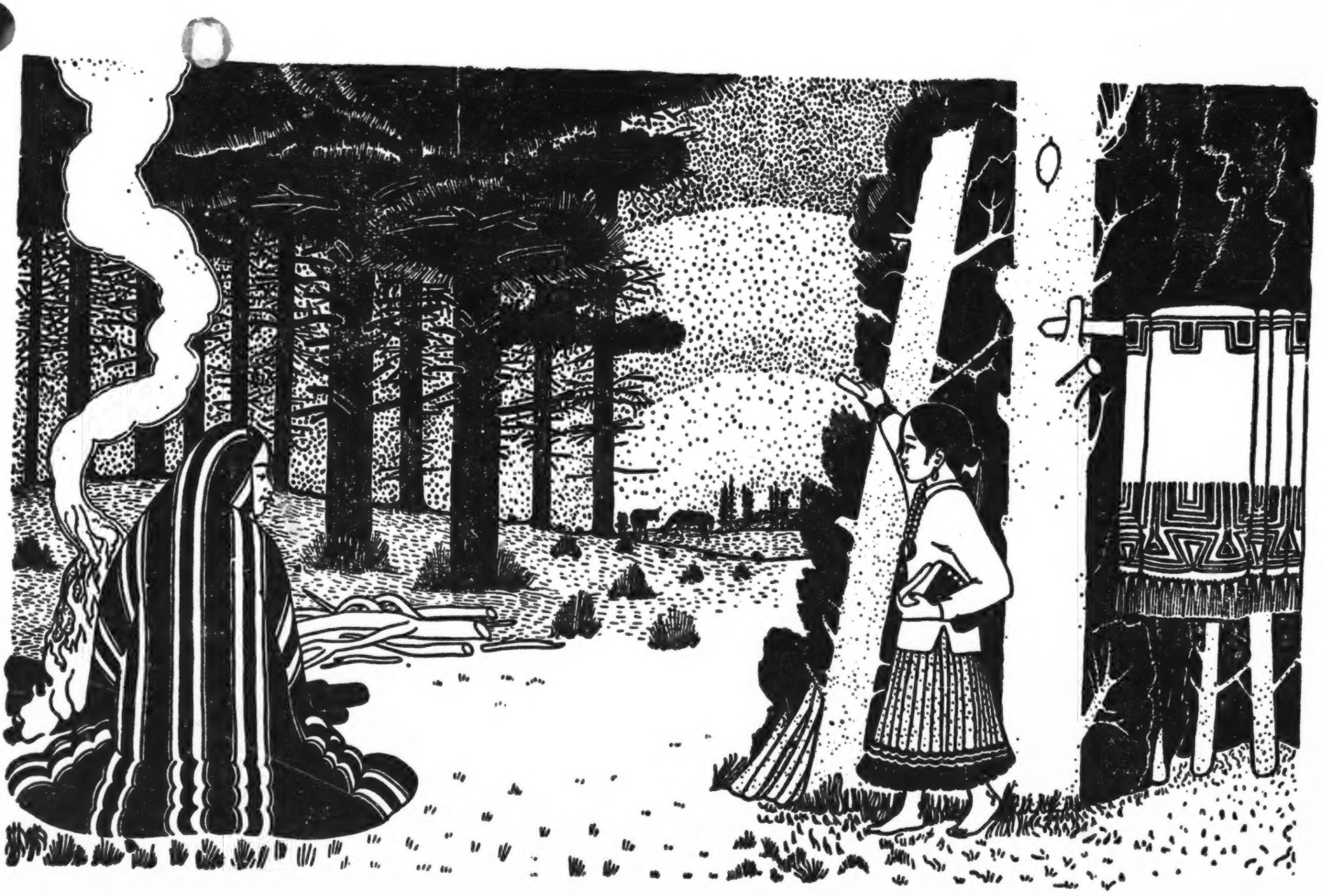
Darkness is gone,
  but it made no sound.

It left no footprints.

The world is still asleep.

Through the pine trees
  day comes up
  light comes up.

Coyotes howl in the dawn.



In the pine trees
bird wings are stirring,
birds songs are stirring.

I hear them.

I hear them.

The grass beside my blanket
is wet with night rain.

Morning mist is on the leaves
and in my hair.

I put one toe out,
one brown toe out.

It is hard to get up
when it is cold.

Blue smoke from my mother's fire
curls upward in a thin blue line.

The sheep move inside their corral.

I come out from under my blanket,
from under my warm blanket.

Like the other things around me,
I come out
to greet the day.

# MORNING PRAYER

Silent and still
   my father stands
   before our summer shelter.

He is thinking a prayer
   to the Holy Ones,
   asking them
   this day
   to keep our feet
   on the trail of beauty.

Filling the silence
   of my father's prayer
   I hear the bluebird's song.

## THE SHEEP

The poor sheep are cold.

Their winter wool was cut off
last week
at shearing time.

When early summer painted
flowers on the desert
with bunches of new grass,
when snow water melted
and softened the hard earth,
when the Sun-Bearer smiled
on the sheep and The People.

Then my mother said,
"Now,
it is shearing time."

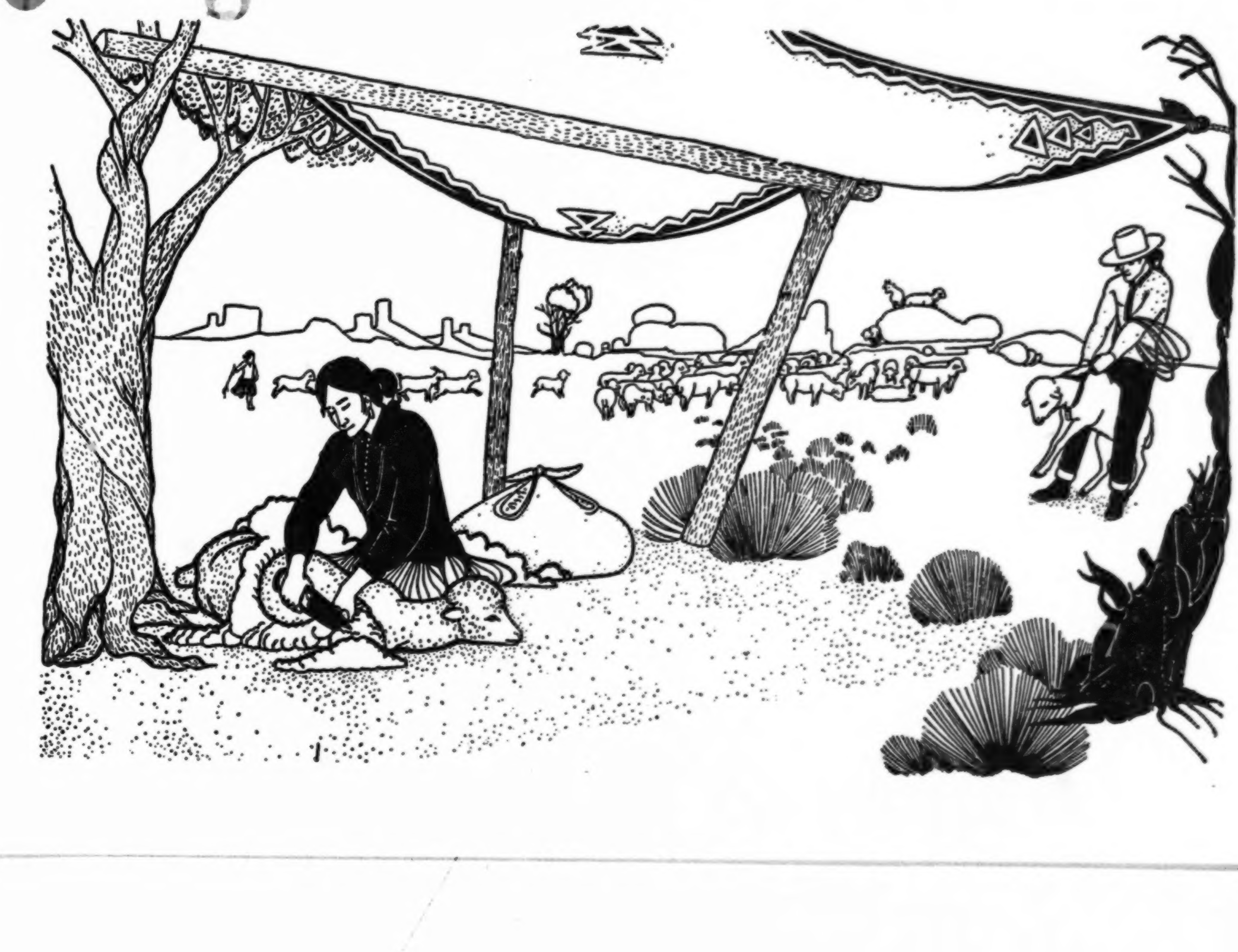
My mother said that last week.

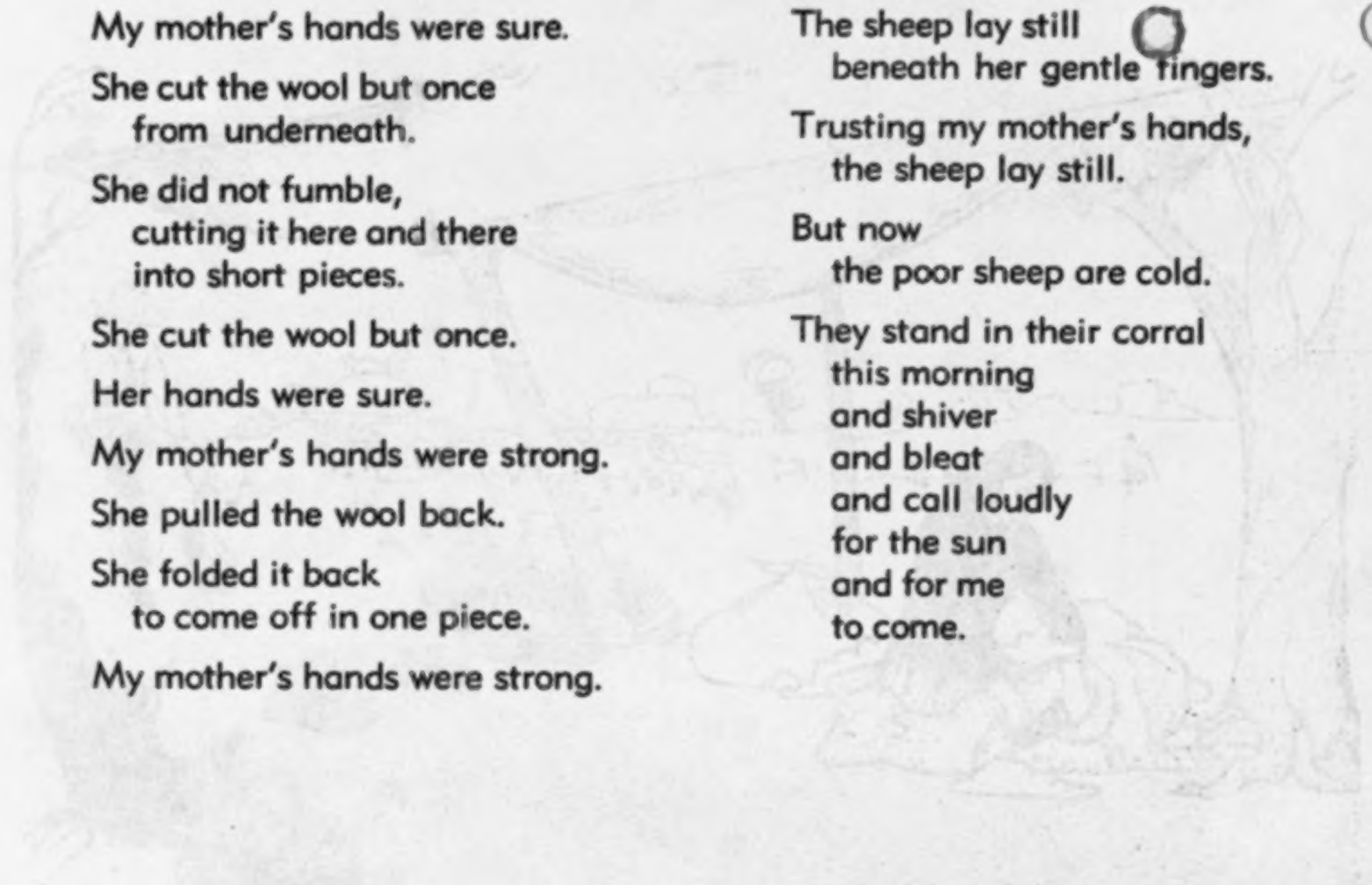
Last week it was shearing time.

Last week
at shearing time,
my mother caught her sheep.

One by one she caught them.

She tied their feet together
and with her shears
she clipped their wool.





My mother's hands were sure.

She cut the wool but once
from underneath.

She did not fumble,
cutting it here and there
into short pieces.

She cut the wool but once.

Her hands were sure.

My mother's hands were strong.

She pulled the wool back.

She folded it back
to come off in one piece.

My mother's hands were strong.

The sheep lay still
beneath her gentle fingers.

Trusting my mother's hands,
the sheep lay still.

But now
the poor sheep are cold.

They stand in their corral
this morning
and shiver
and bleat
and call loudly
for the sun
and for me
to come.

D

# THE GOATS

Goats lead the sheep.
They go first into everything.
That is their way.
My uncle says in the English,
They are not afraid.
  "Goats are tough."

Goats eat the grass too far down.

They eat the trees too far up.

That is their way.

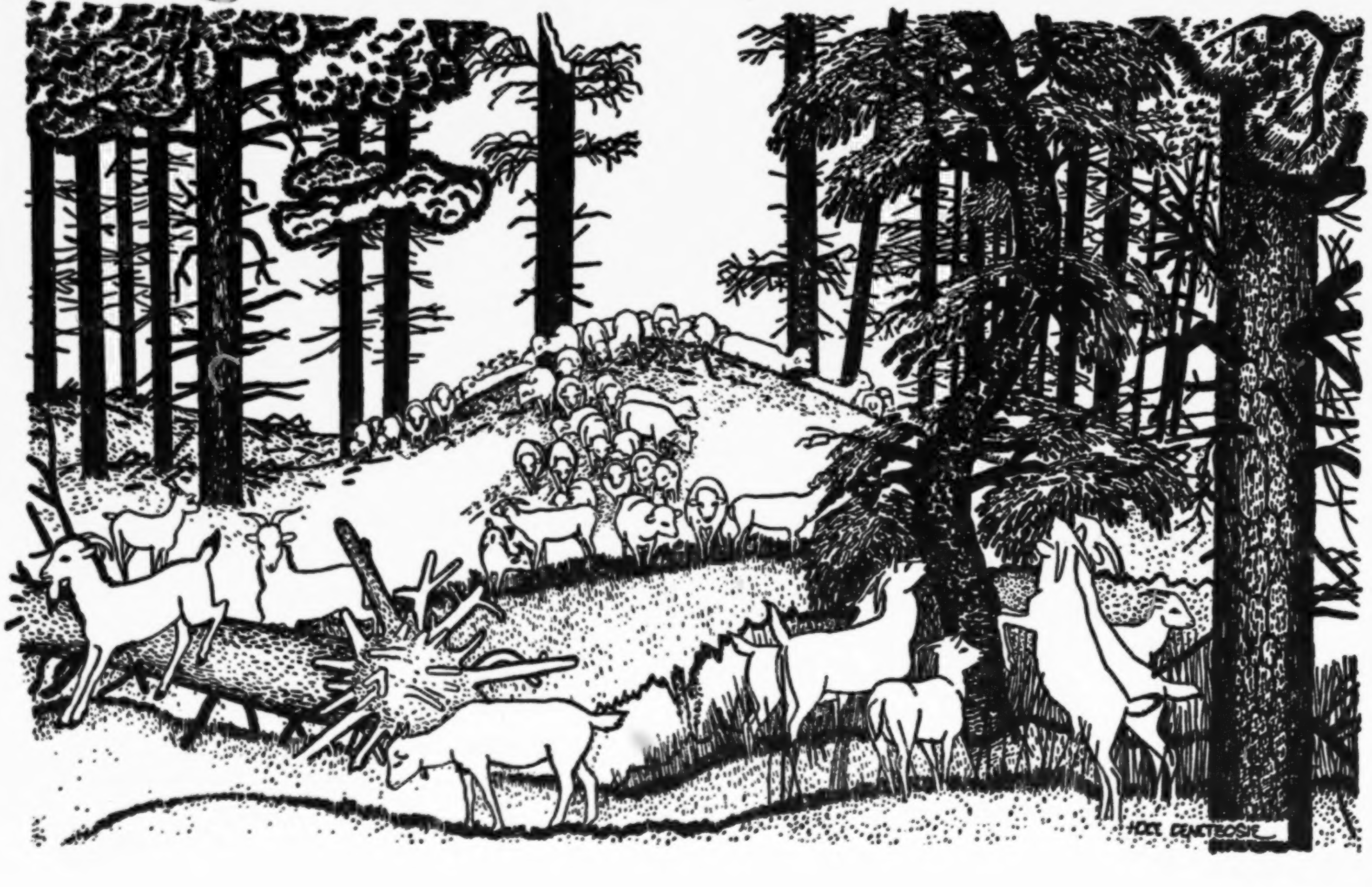
They do not care.

My uncle says in the English,
"Goats are tough."

Goats, more than shee[illegible]
get into my mother's stew pot.

Their meat is good,
but it takes chewing,
too much chewing.

I say with my uncle,
"Goats are tough."


HOKE DENETSOSIE

## HERDING

After we have eaten our morning food,
my father and my uncle
ride down the steep trail
to the trading post.

My mother kneels beside her loom
before the cottonwood shade.

I see the sun on my mother's
brown hands.

I see the sun on my mother's
black hair.

I give my mother a long look,
then I turn my back.

I walk to the sheep corral.

My feet are brown.

My feet are bare.

The wet grass parts
to make a way
to let me pass.

I walk to the sheep corral.

My skirts are long.

My skirts are many.

The flowers move back
to make a way
to let me pass.

I walk to the sheep corral.

I let down the bars.

The sheep go first
and I follow.

The sheep walk slowly
for they like to eat
the short sweet grass
under the trees.

I walk slowly
for I am lonely.

Things here are strange.

I am afraid.

I know that my mother sits
before our shelter
weaving a blanket at her loom.

I know she is near me,
but I cannot see her.

I can see only tall trees
and bits of sky.

I am a child of the yellow sand.

Mesa top and pine trees,
green grass and colored flowers
are strange to me.

Unknown things live here.

I am afraid.

I creep to the edge of the mesa
while my sheep are feeding.

Far, far below me
is the world I know,
the yellow world
of sand and wind
and sand.

Far below
I see sheep walking,
someone's sheep walking,
in a dust cloud
of their own making.

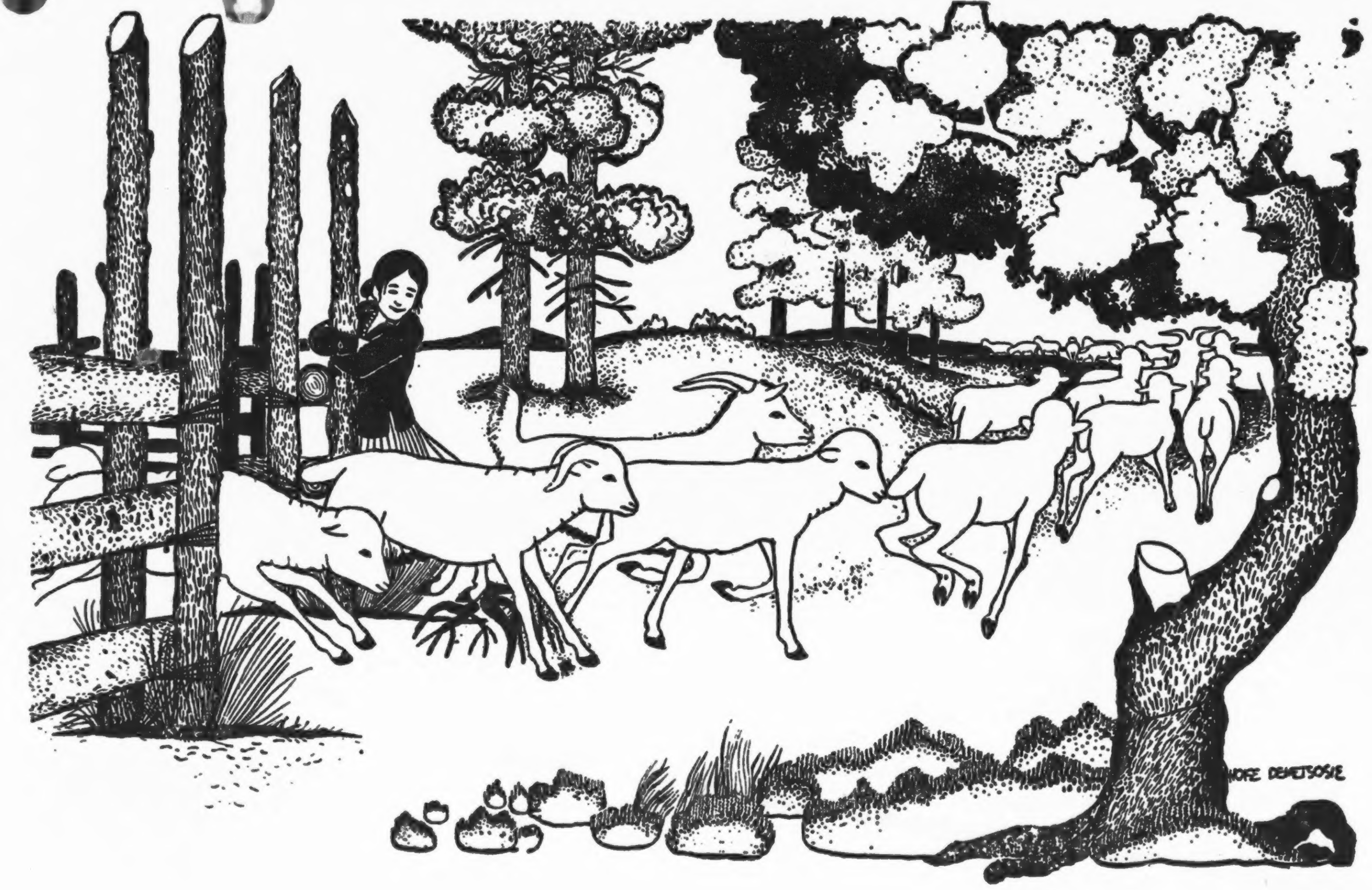
Far below
I see a sand whirl
made by an angry wind
fighting the land.

Far below
I see the heat haze,
colored heat haze
blanketing the desert.

I see these things
through tears
I know.

I am lonely without them.

Here on top of the mesa
is a strange world
of shadows and water
and grass for the sheep.


NORE DEMETSOSIE

Grass for the sheep,
I had forgotten that.

Grass for the sheep
to give them life,
to make them strong.

Here on top of the mesa
there is grass for our sheep.

Surely the gods are good
who live here.

The sheep drink slowly.
Shadows sleep.

The quiet of the mes
pushes against me.

I can feel it, heavy, heavy,
it pushes against me.

Surely, the gods who live here
are known to me.

The words of the Holy Song
are known to me.

"On top of the mountain
are found the gods."

These are the words
of the Holy Song.

# NOON ON THE MESA

Day grows long
  and bright with sunlight.

The sheep eat their way
  to the rain lakes
  under the willows.

Little rivers run through the tall grass
  and hide away in the rushes.

I see a line of scattered clouds
  across the sky.

Sun-Bearer rests
  on his way
  to the House of Turquoise Woman
  in the Western Waters.

It is middle-time of day.

# AFTERNOON

Lying on my back
  under the willows
  I can see an eagle flying
  far above
  in great circles
  against the blue.

I feel
  and see
  and listen,
  but I do not talk.

There is no one to hear me.

There is no one to play with me,
  only the lambs and the baby goats
  and they like each other
  better than me,
  I think.

I am alone.

## PLAYMATES

But look!!

There are butterflies,
small white butterflies
above the flower plants
of purple iris.

I sit among the iris.

I hear the whispering
of white wings flying.

I think they like my velvet blouse.

I think they like my long black hair
because they come to me
and to the purple iris,
those small white butterflies.

A little fat chipmunk
on a brown-striped blanket
comes close to me.

He sits on his feet.

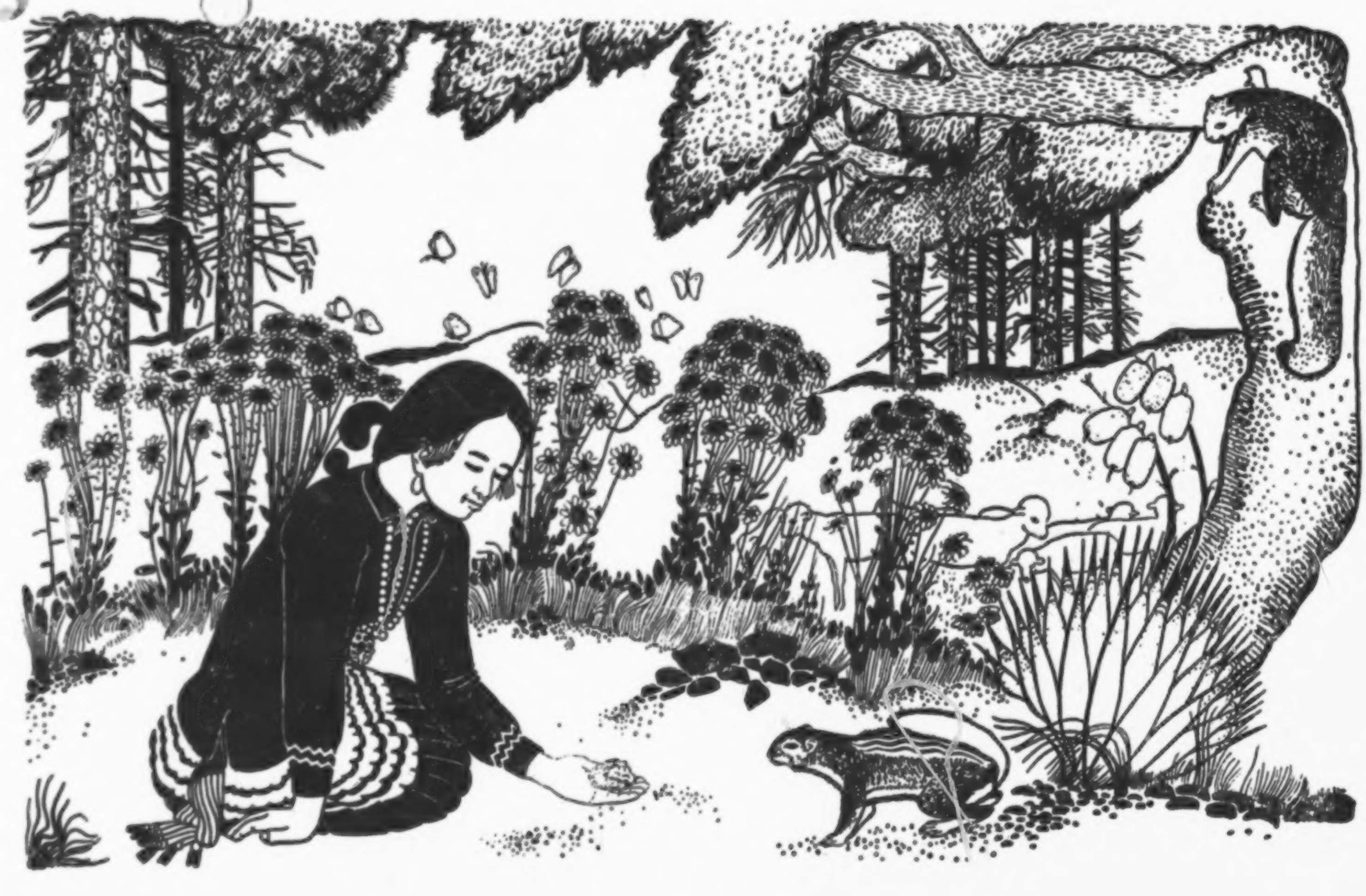
He holds his hands out.

He wrinkles his nose and looks at me.

I give him bread.

He holds it in his han[illegible]
and with little quick bites
stores it away
in his fat brown cheeks.

Funny little chipmunk
in his brown-striped blanket
with storerooms in his face!



Gray squirrels with bushy tails
run up and down the trees.

They chatter to me.

They make me laugh.

I pull my skirts around me
and follow the squirrels.

Now I know where they live.

Now I know where I can find
piñon nuts this autumn.

I feel the warmth
of Sun-Bearer's shiel
against my back.

And on my face
I feel cool fingers
of rain-cloud shadows.

With my hands on the warm earth
beside me,
almost,
I can feel things growing.

Why did I think
I was alone?

# POSSESSIONS

I am making a song
  to sing to myself.

It is about my possessions.

I have a woven hair tie.

I have a woven belt.

My mother made them for me.

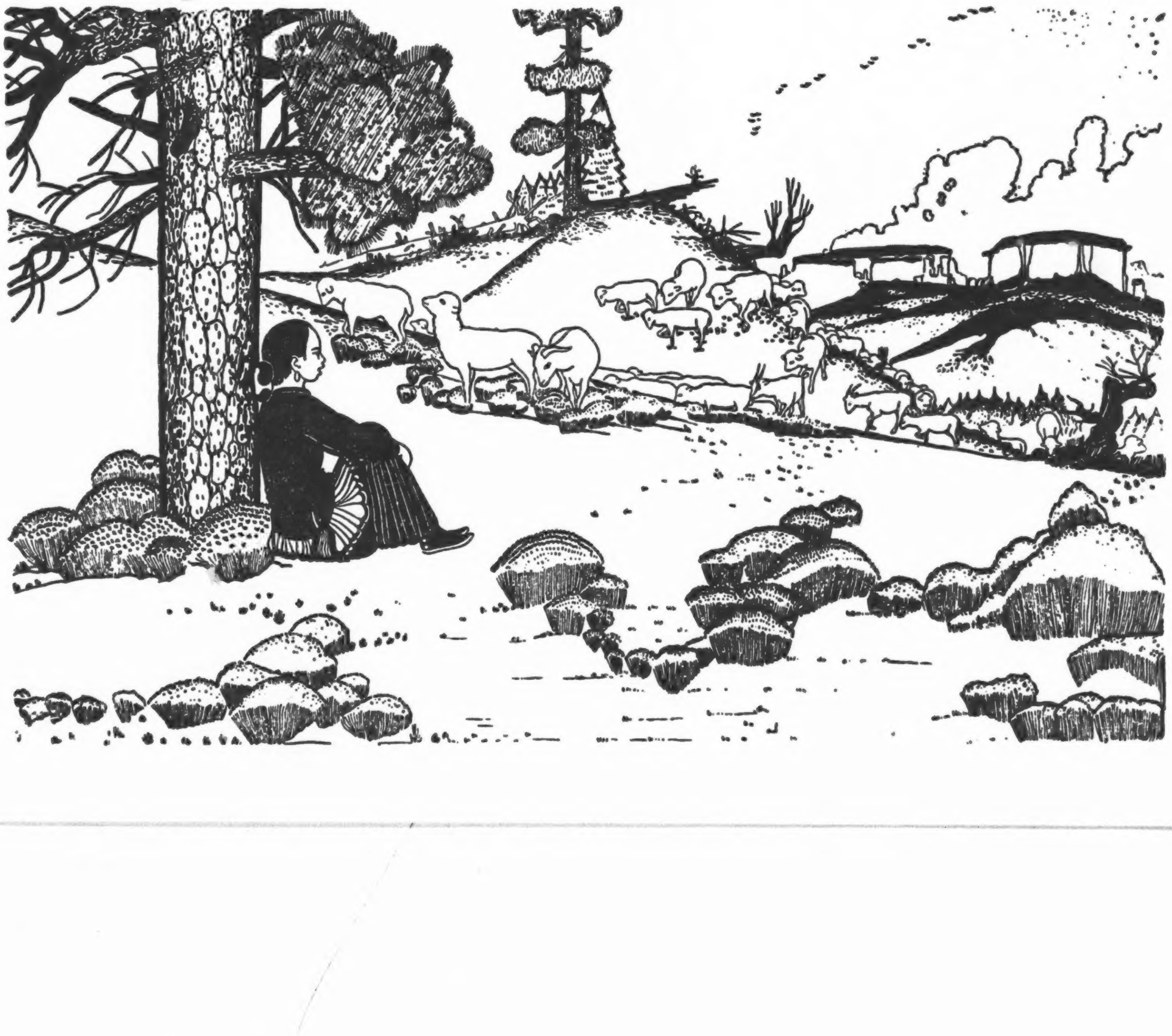
My mother gave them to me.

They are my possessions.

I have silver rings on my fingers.
I have silver bracelets on my arms.
My father made them for me.
My father gave them to me.
They are my possessions.

Soft things
and hard things
I have for my possessions.

A song,
a song,
I am singing a song about them.



## STORM

A storm wind comes to stop my song.

It comes through the trees
with the strength of anger.

It sways me forward.

It sways me backward.

It turns me when I am walking.

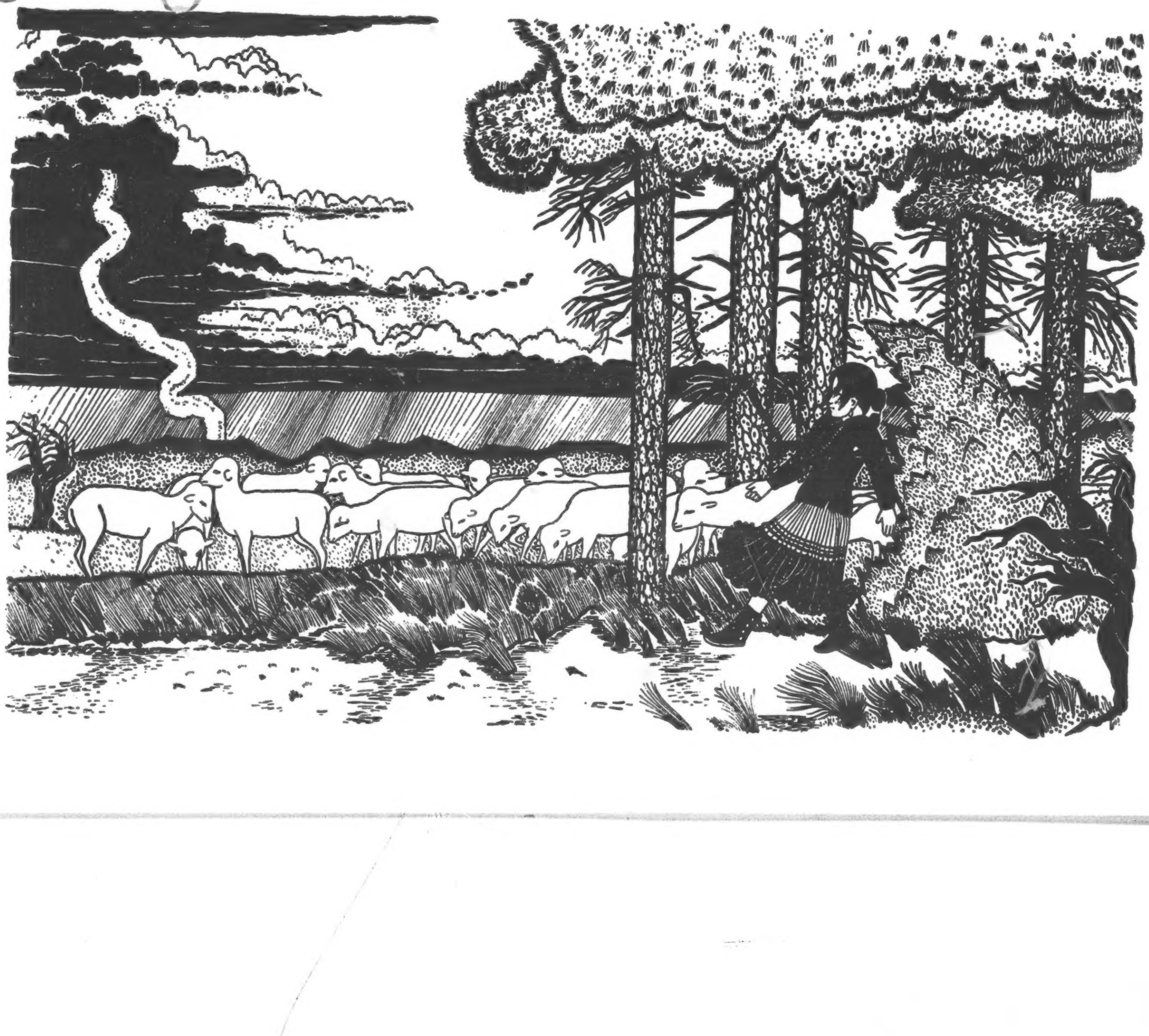
Black clouds gather
to blanket the thunder.

Zig-zag lightning
cuts the clouds in two.

My sheep crowd near me.

With soft words I speak to them.

I tell them
not to be afraid
for I am here.



# LIGHTNING

Lightning darts
  like an arrow,
  an arrow of fire,
  from an unseen bow.

It darts in flame
  from the gray sky
  to the gray earth.

It strikes a tree.

Lightning strikes a tree.

My sheep,
  my sheep,

I must save my sheep
  from this evil around them.

I must save them,
  my sheep,
  my poor frightened sheep.

## FIRE

Fire runs up the tall tree trunk
  and into the branches.

The tree is on fire.

The tree is aflame.

It blazes.

It crackles.

It burns.

The sheep look to me to protect them.

My poor frightened sheep,
  I do not know which way
  to take them.

# RAIN

But wait!

The sky is opening.

Rain comes through.

Male rain comes through,
comes down in sheets of water,
pours down in sheets of water
drenching the flames
of the burning tree.

My mother comes running
between the trees.

She is frightened for the sheep
and for me.

I tell her
all things are good.

Lightning did not touch the sheep.

Male rain saved the trees from fire.

Male rain saved us from forest fire.

Now male rain has gone
down into the valley.

Female rain follows
with soft footsteps.

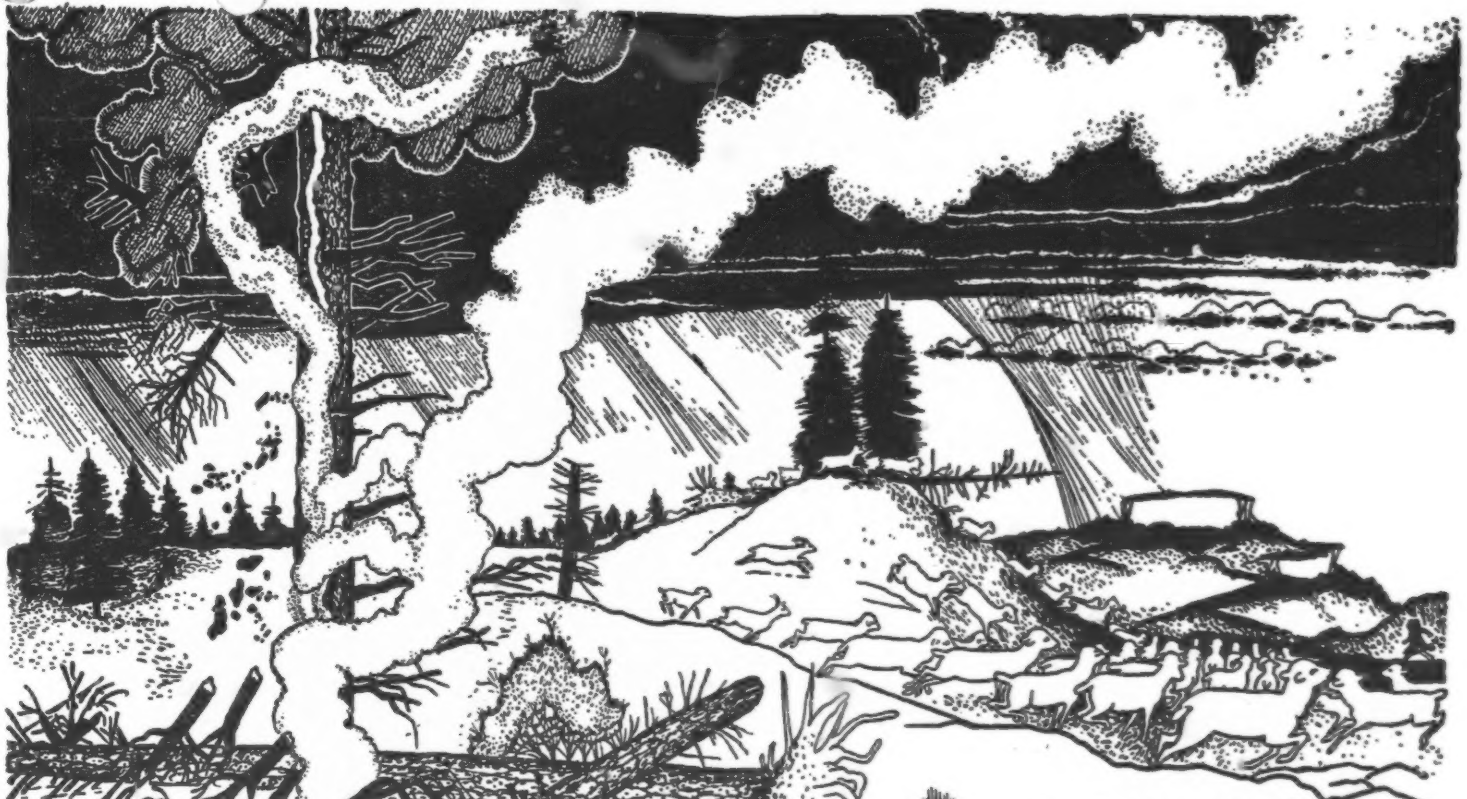
Flowers turn upward

Leaves turn upward
lifting their hands
to catch the gentle rain.

It is good.

The rain is good.

I open my hands
to catch the gentle rain.



## EVENING

Sun-Bearer parts the clouds
and looks down on the rain.

He turns each raindrop
into a silver bead.

He turns each rainstreak
into a silver necklace.

He makes a rainbow path
for the gods
across the sky.

I go among the sheep,
the huddled, wet sheep.

I sing to them.

I sing to the sheep,
a song, a song,
a song about my possessions,
my ceremonial goods.

I have a little buckskin bag
filled with things,
with things.

My grandfather filled it for me.

My grandfather gave it to me.

Wherever I go
I carry my little buckskin bag
to keep me safe,
to keep my feet
on the trail of beauty.

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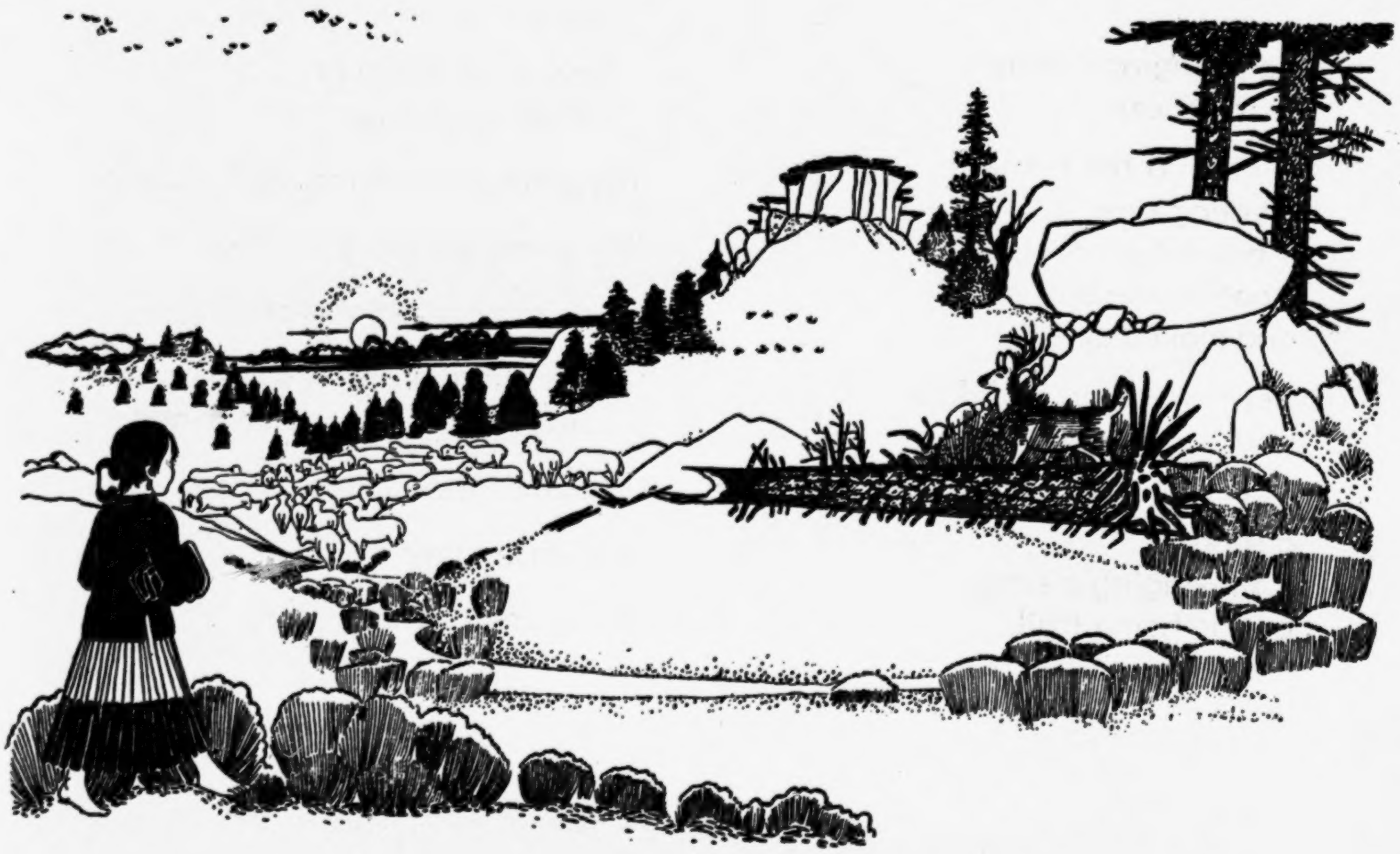


A song,
a song,
I am singing a song
to my sheep.

Just now on the home trail,
a young deer,
a beautiful young deer,
stood in the bushes
and looked at me.

His eyes were big and dark
and full of questions.

A song,
a song,
I am singing a song
on the home trail.

I have a necklace of
turquoise and coral.

I have a necklace of
white shell and coral.

My grandmother traded for them.

My grandmother gave them to me.

They are my possessions.

I have turquoise in my ears,
silver bells on my belt fringe.

My uncle made them for me.

My uncle gave them to me.

They are my possessions.

A song,
a song,
I am singing a song
to my sheep.

My father has five kinds
of possessions.

He has hard goods
and soft goods,
ceremonial goods
and land
and game.

But I am little.

I do not have five kinds.

I have three.

I made a song about them
to sing the sheep home.

At last we reach the home camp.

The sheep are safe in their corral.

I am safe with my mother.

Summer shade is at my back.

In front of me is my mother's fire.

I am dry and warm.

Good food is cooking.

My mother sings,
and all around me
there is beauty.

## SUPPER

My father and my uncle
  ride up from the trading post,
  the Red Rock Trading Post
  down near the winter hogan.

Long before I heard them
  I could feel them coming.

Long before I saw them
  I could hear them singing.

Now they ride into the firelight,
  my father and my uncle.

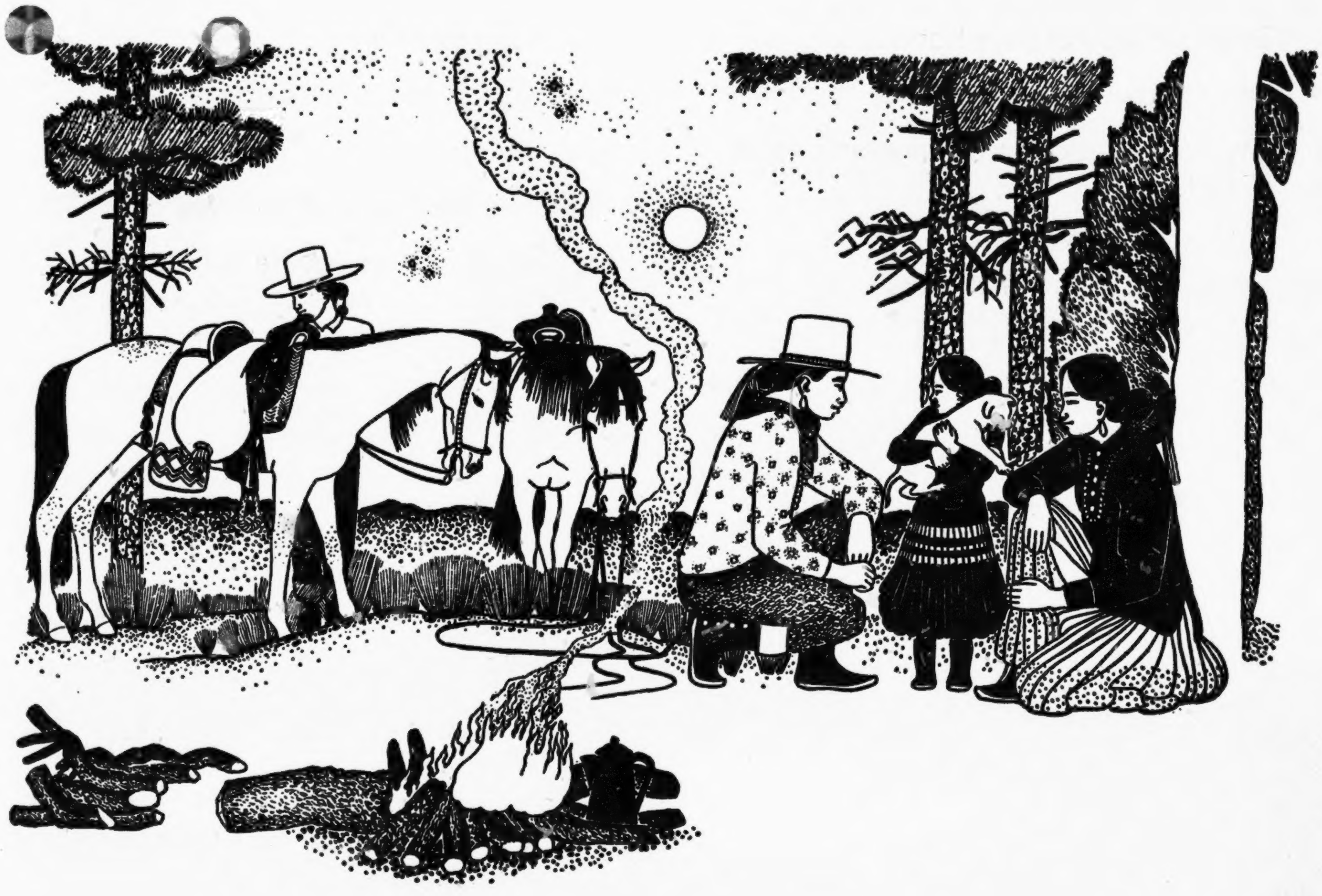
My father brought salt
  and baking powder
  and lard
  for my mother
  from the trading post.

He brought candy
  for me.

My father brought news,
  much news.

Things he had seen,
  things that were told to him
  at the trading post.

He brought them back
  for us to hear.



Then we washed our hands.

We sat away from the fire.

My mother placed the evening food before us.

When we had eaten my father gave thanks to the Holy Ones.

We washed our hands again.

My uncle put new wood upon the fire.

Then the best part of the day began.

My father and my uncle talked.

# TALKING

My father said
in ten days
would be the time
for dipping the sheep.

He and my uncle
would help my mother and me
drive the sheep to the dipping.

Sheep must be dipped
in medicine-water.

There is no pollen.

There is no Holy Song.

There is no trail of beauty
in this medicine-water.

But my father says
it is good for the sheep.

Sheep get lice
hidden in their thick wool.

Lice make the sheep unhappy.

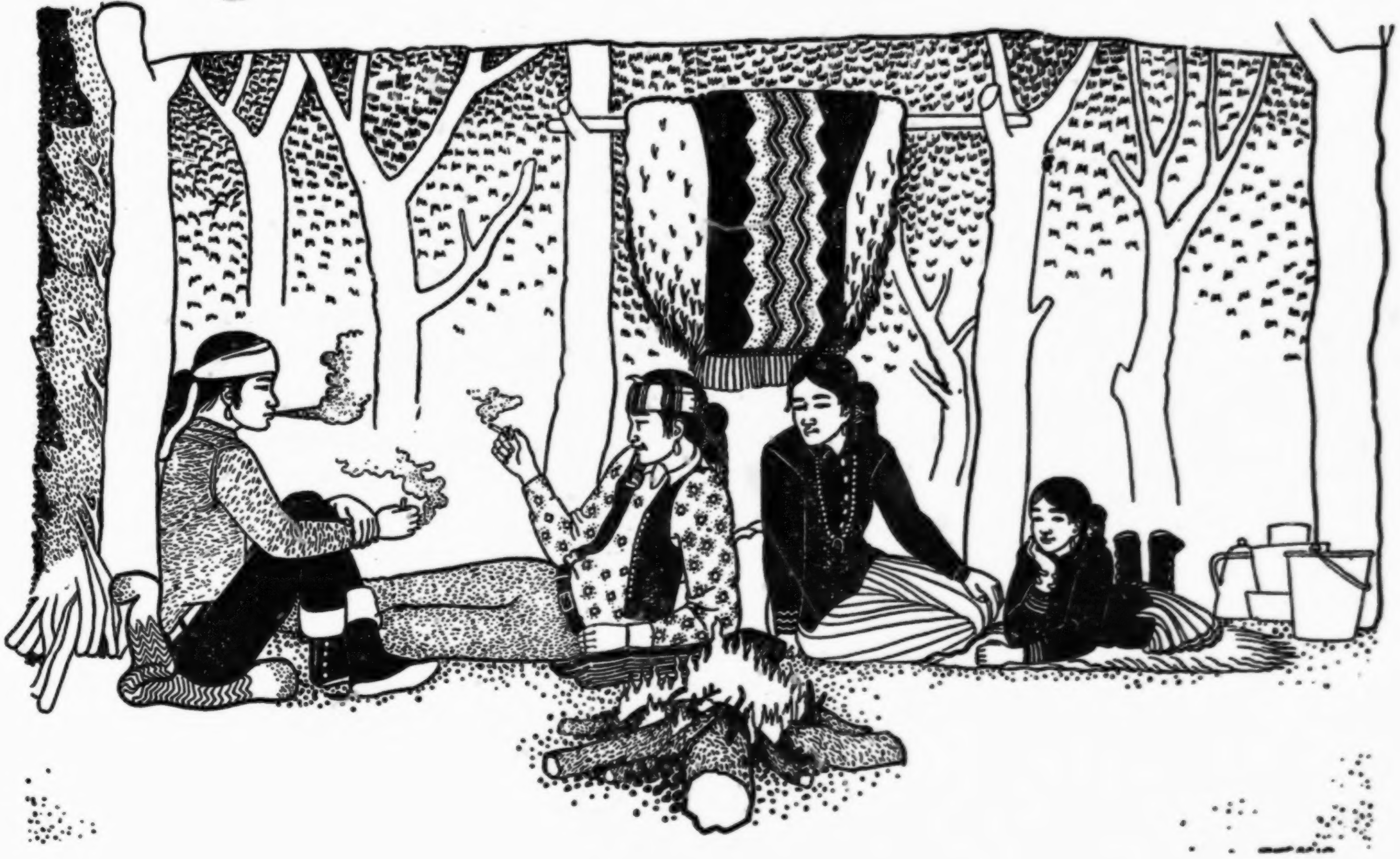
Lice make the sheep bite their wool.

Lice are bad for sheep.

Dipping the sheep
in medicine-water
kills the lice.

Ticks are bad for sheep.

Ticks live
on the sheep's good blood.



Ticks make the sheep thin
and weak.

If the sheep are robbed
of their good blood
they cannot stand
the cold of winter.

They cannot stand
the heat of summer.

They sicken.
Their wool is not good.

Dipping the sheep
in medicine-water
kills the lice and the ticks.

It is good for the sheep.

My mother does not like dipping
because she does not understand
why the sheep are dipped.

But my father talks to her.
He tells her about lice and ticks.

He tells her too
that she is quickest and best
of all the women
at dipping her sheep
in the medicine-water.

# SHEEP DIPPING

All the people
with their sheep and goats
and horses and wagons
and children and dogs
go to the dipping.

There is much dust and work
and singing and eating
at dipping time.

I like it.

Sheep do not like dipping.

They do not like to take a bath
in the medicine-water
even though it is good for them.

When grandfather goat gets dipped
he is angry, very angry.

He does not like
to get his whiskers wet.

Tomorrow, first thing,
I will tell old goat, old goat,
that in ten days
Washington will
wash his whiskers.
My father talks of other things
besides the dipping.

His voice goes on and on
like wind in trees,
like water running,
like soft rain falling,
like drum beats pounding,
talk,
talk,
talking.

# BEDTIME

After a time
  my mother and I
  unroll our blankets.

We go to bed
  beneath the cottonwood shade.

I have my own prayer
  to the night.

I whisper it,
  whisper it,
  but only the night wind hears.

The horses move
  within the shadows.

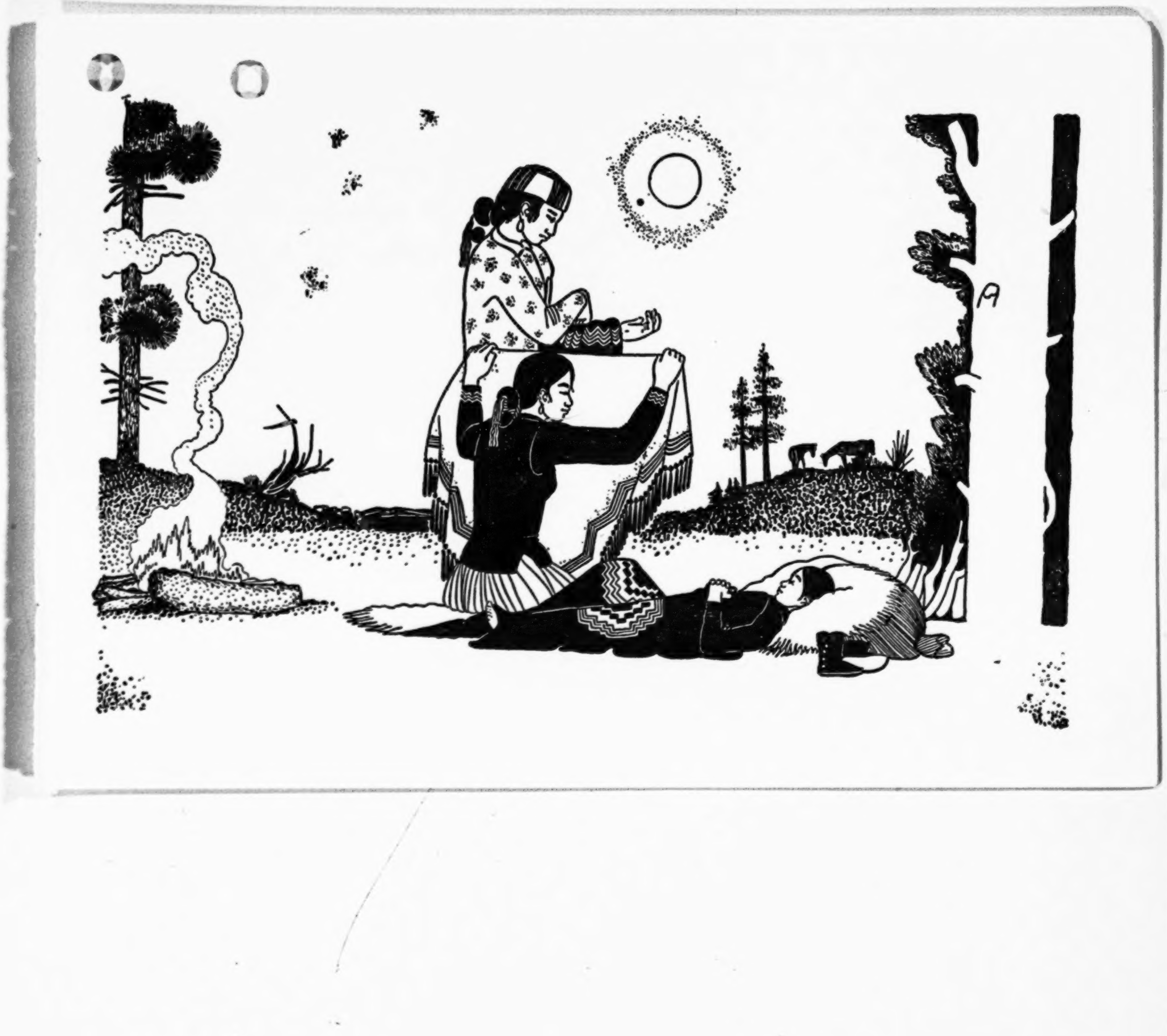
My father sings.

It is night.

The sheep move
  within the circle of branches.

My mother sleeps.

It is night.


A

## THE STAR SONG

Softly my father sings
the Star Song
to the stars and me.

"When the world was being made,
being made,
when the gods were
placing stars,
the stars,
the stars in patterns
in the sky,
coyote stole the star bag,
coyote spilled the stars out
in the sky,
helter skelter in the sky,
when the world
was being made."

Softly my father sings it,
the Star Song,
to the stars and me.

Darkness covers me.

Beauty covers me.

My mother is near.

My father is near,

The sheep are safe.

The words of the Holy Song
come to me,
"On top of the mountain
I found the gods."

It is night.

It is night.
Happiness comes to me.

I sleep.

# LITTLE HERDER IN AUTUMN

## ANN CLARK

RC 002714

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BRANCH OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

# LITTLE HERDER IN AUTUMN

## ANN CLARK

ILLUSTRATED BY

HOKE DENETSOSIE

A Publication of the Branch of Education
Bureau of Indian Affairs
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## HOME LAND

The land
    around my mother's hogan
    is big.
It is still.
It has walls of red rocks.

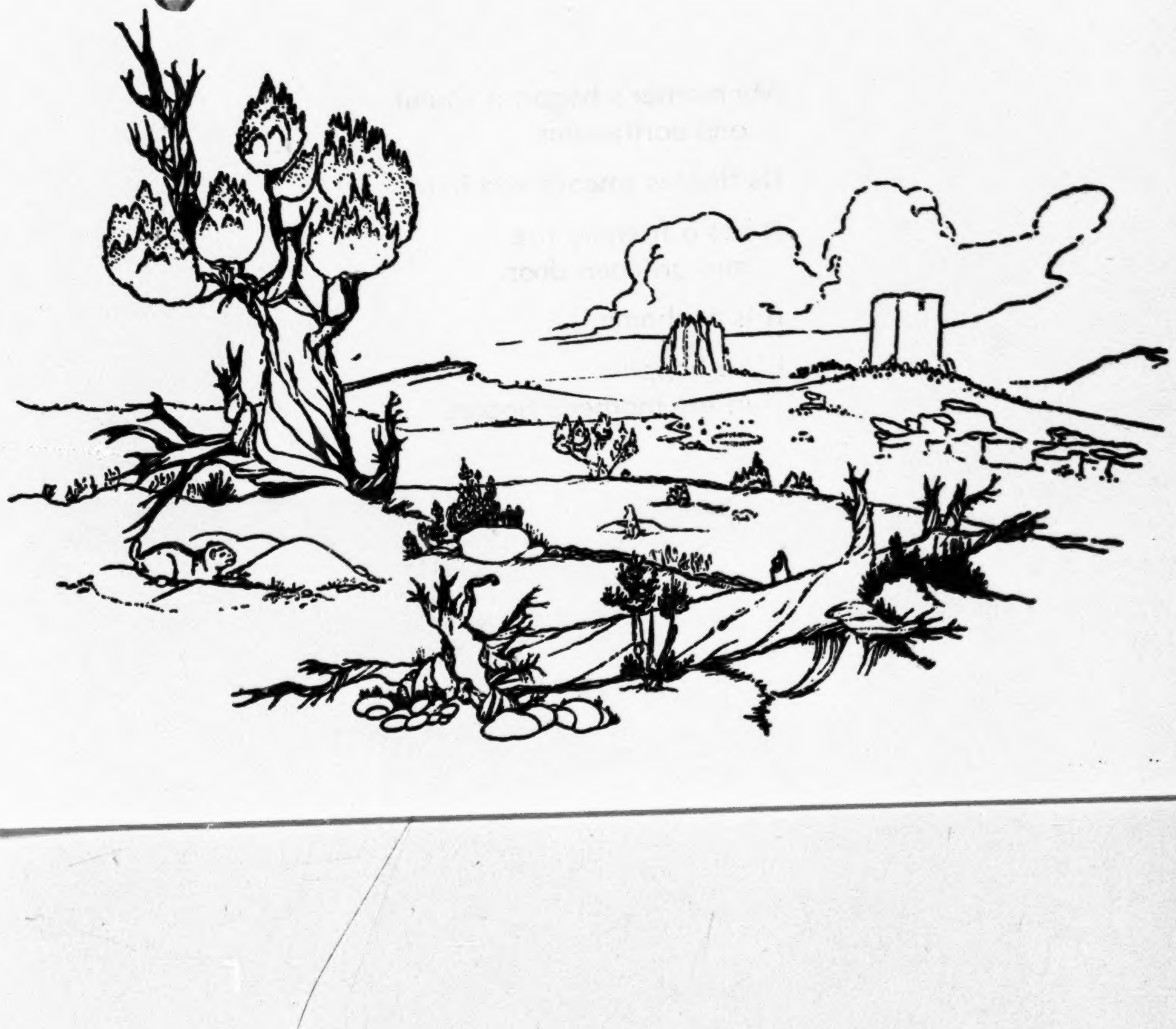
And way, far off
    the sky comes down
    to touch the sands.

Blue sky is above me.

Yellow sand is beneath me.

The sheep are around me.

My mother's hogan is near.



# THE HOGAN

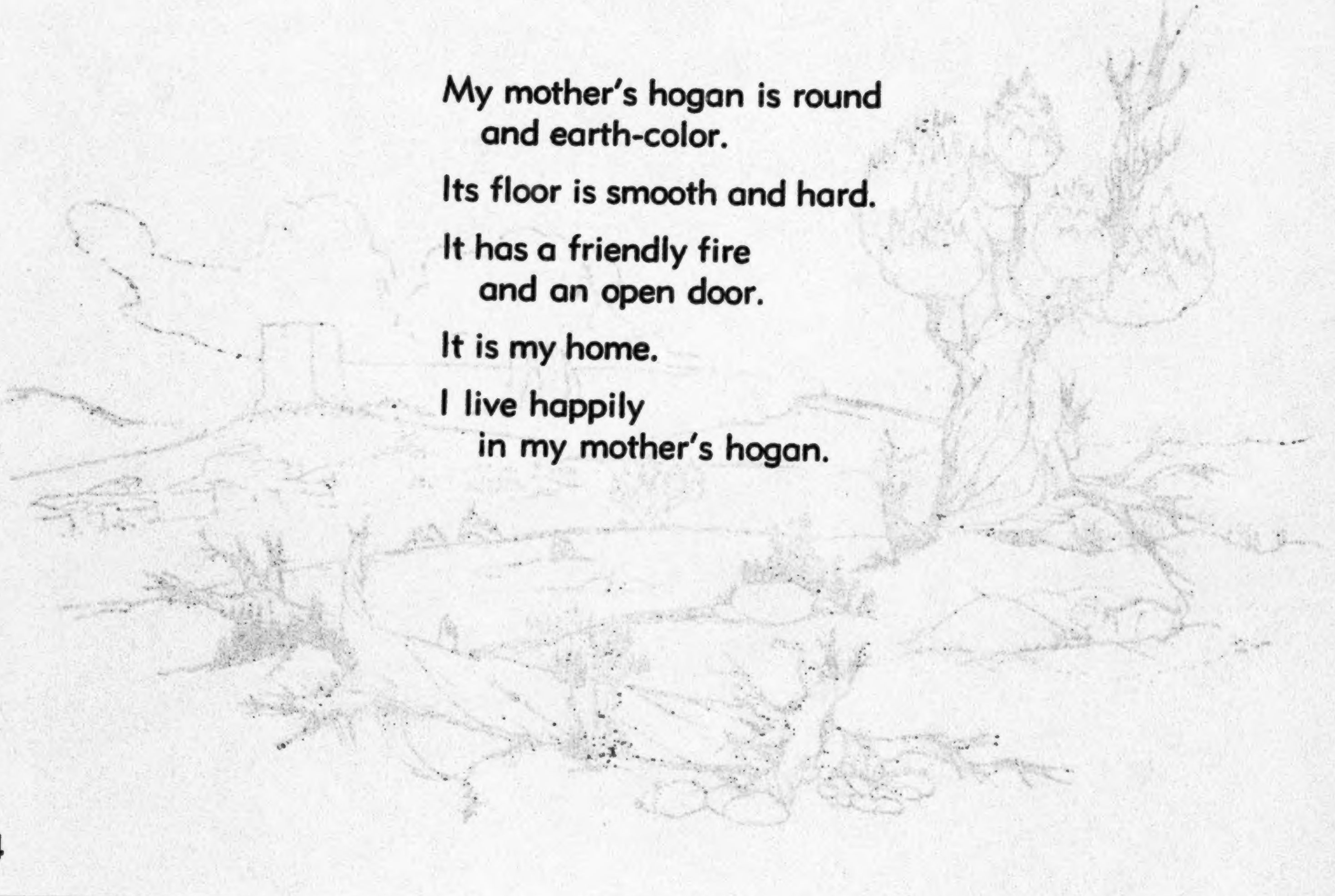
My mother's hogan is round
  and earth-color.

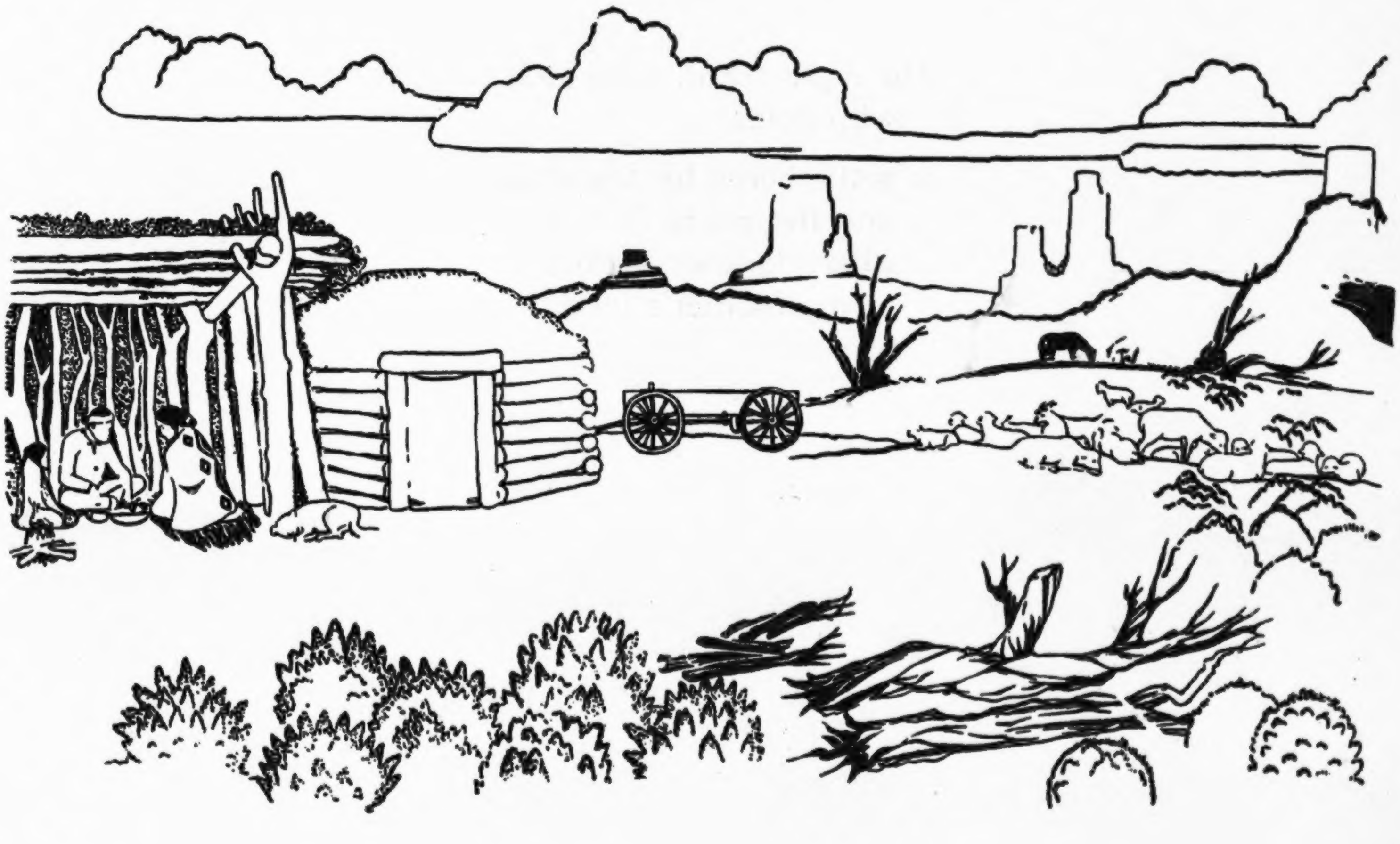
Its floor is smooth and hard.

It has a friendly fire
  and an open door.

It is my home.

I live happily
  in my mother's hogan.

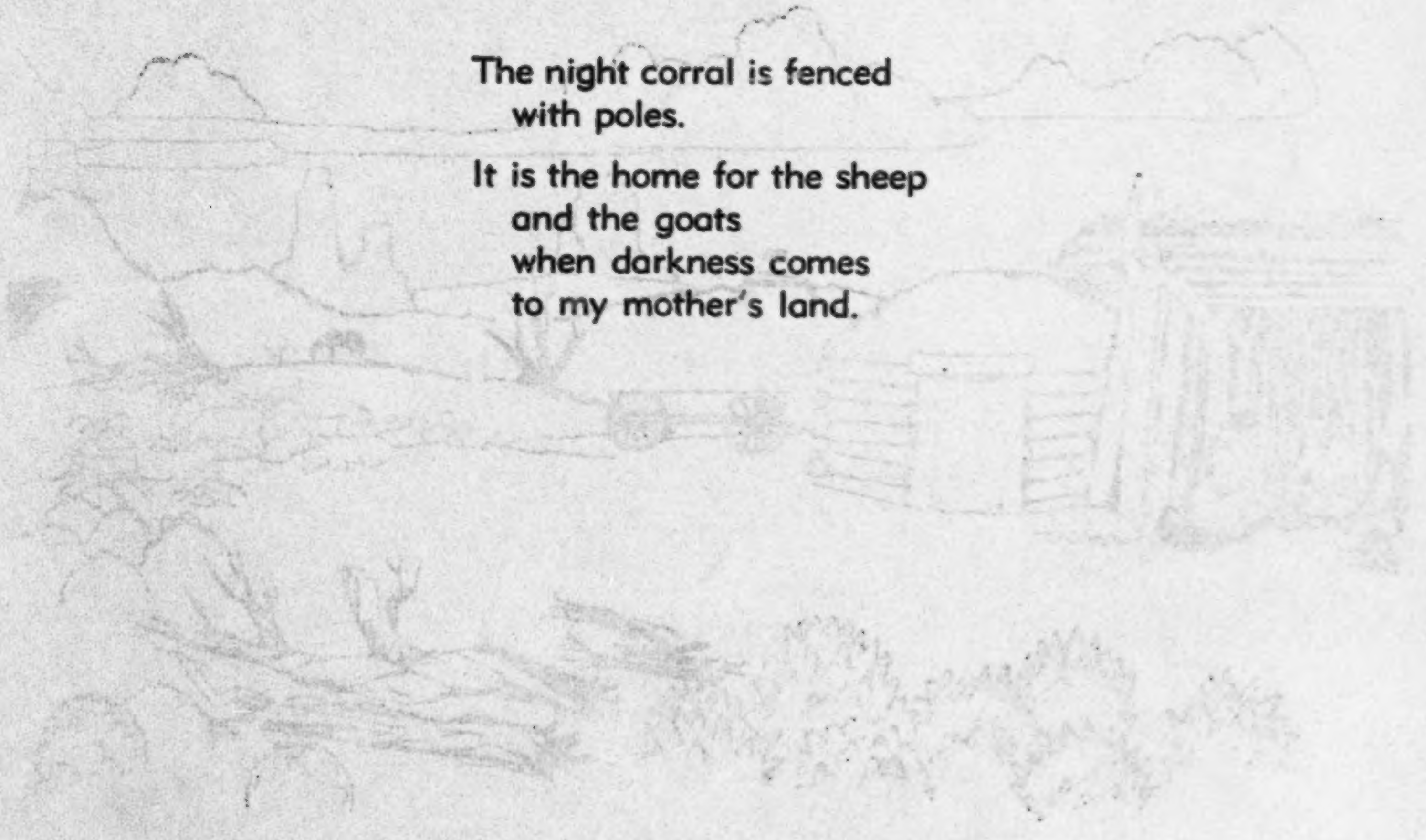


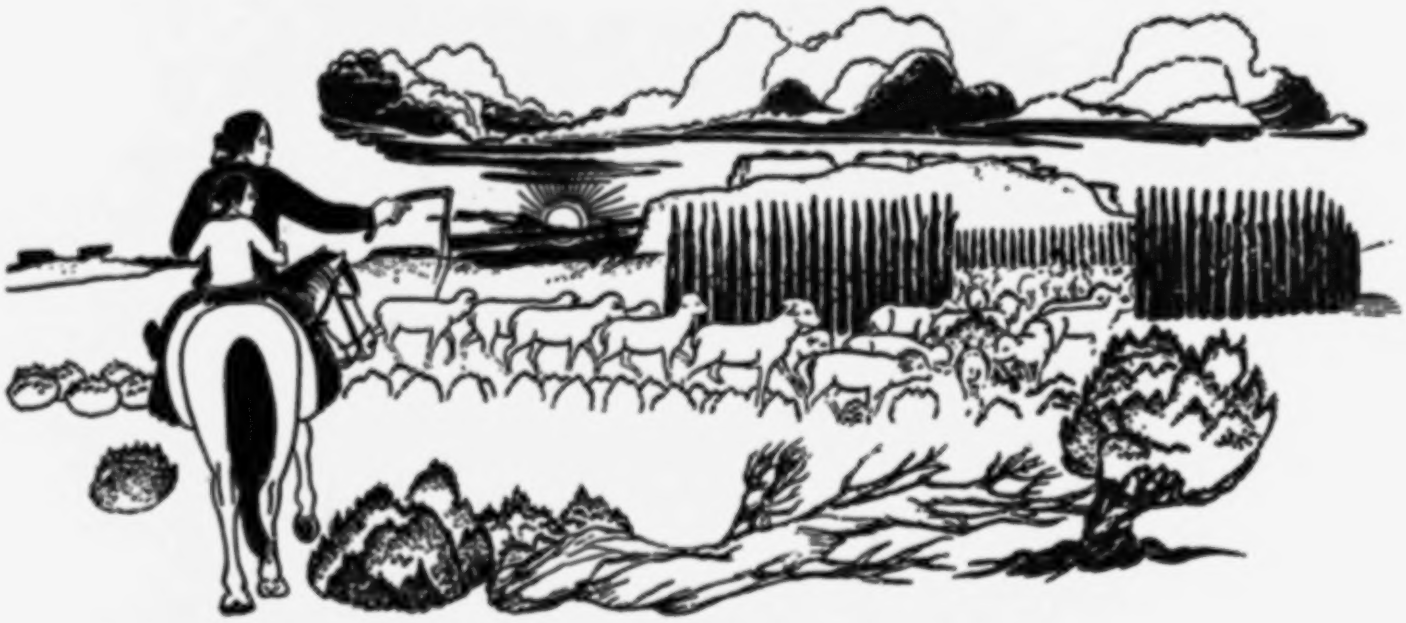


## NIGHT CORRAL

The night corral is fenced
with poles.

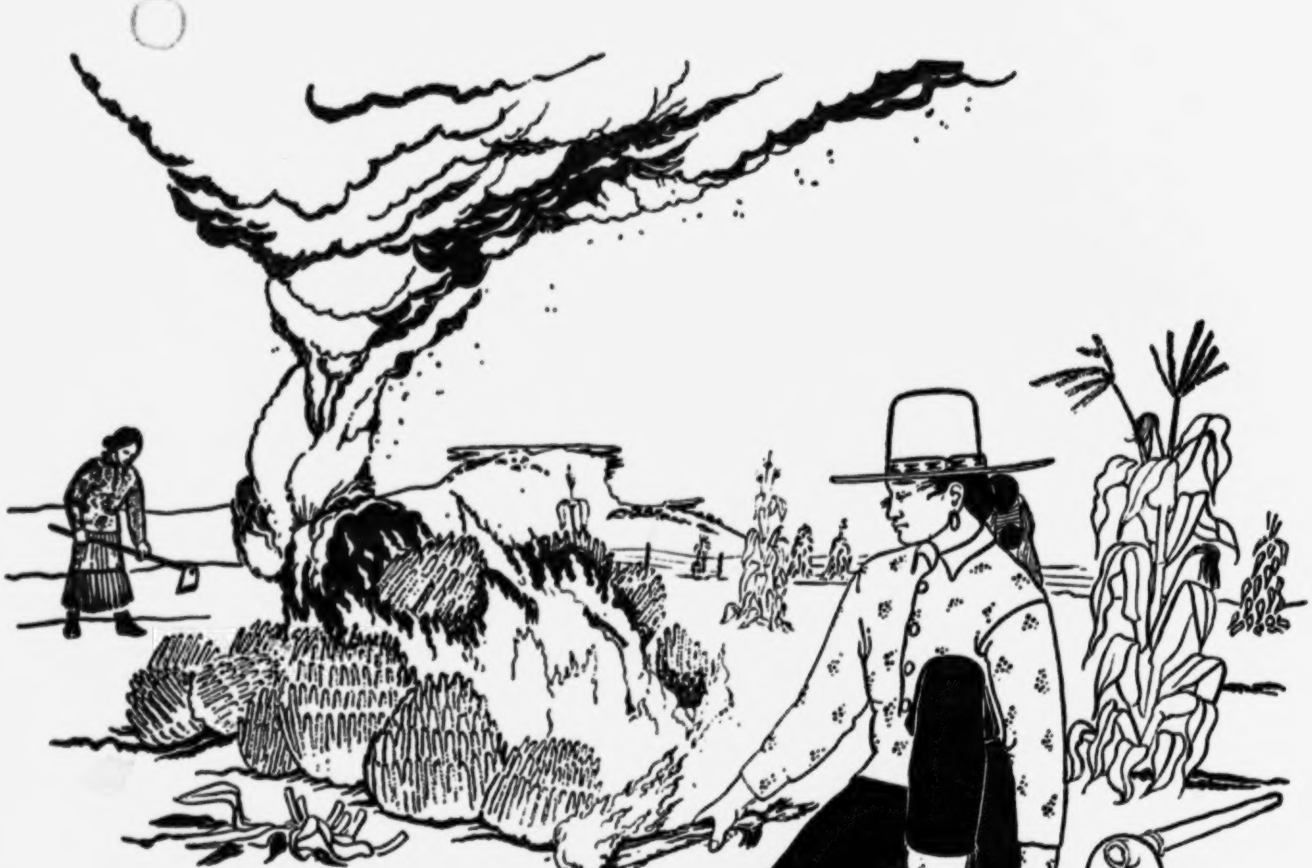
It is the home for the sheep
and the goats
when darkness comes
to my mother's land.





## THE CORNFIELD

The cornfield is fenced with poles.
My mother works in the cornfield.
My father works in the cornfield.
While they are working
  I walk among the corn plants.
I sing to the tall tasseled corn.
In the middle
  of all these known things
  stands my mother's hogan
  with its open door.



## MY MOTHER

My mother is sun-browned color.

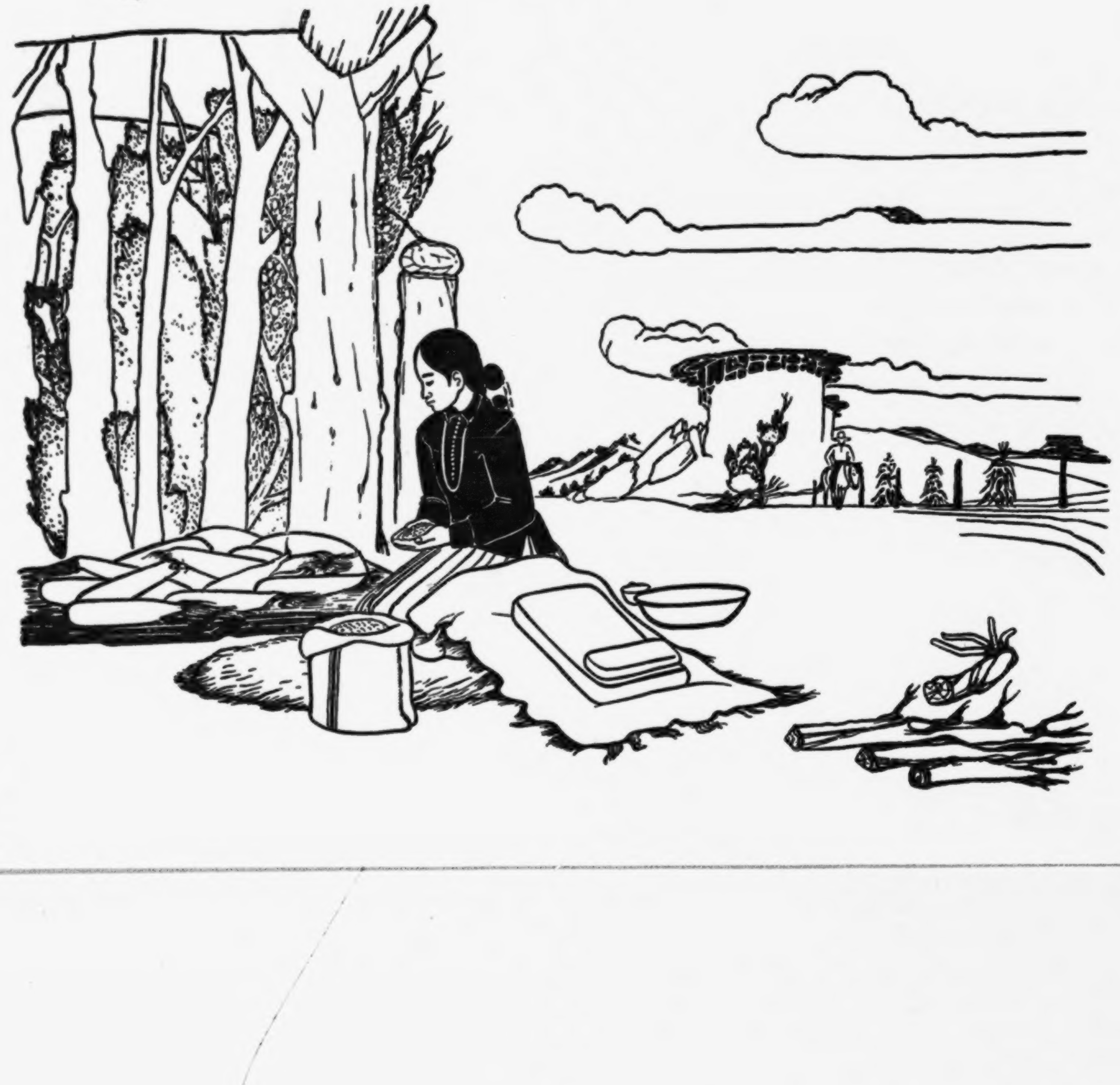
Her eyes are dark.

Her hair shines black.

My mother is good to look at,
but I like her hands the best.

They are beautiful.

They are strong and quick
at working,
but when they touch my hands
they are slow moving
and gentle.



# MY FATHER

My father is tall.

He is strong.

He is brave.

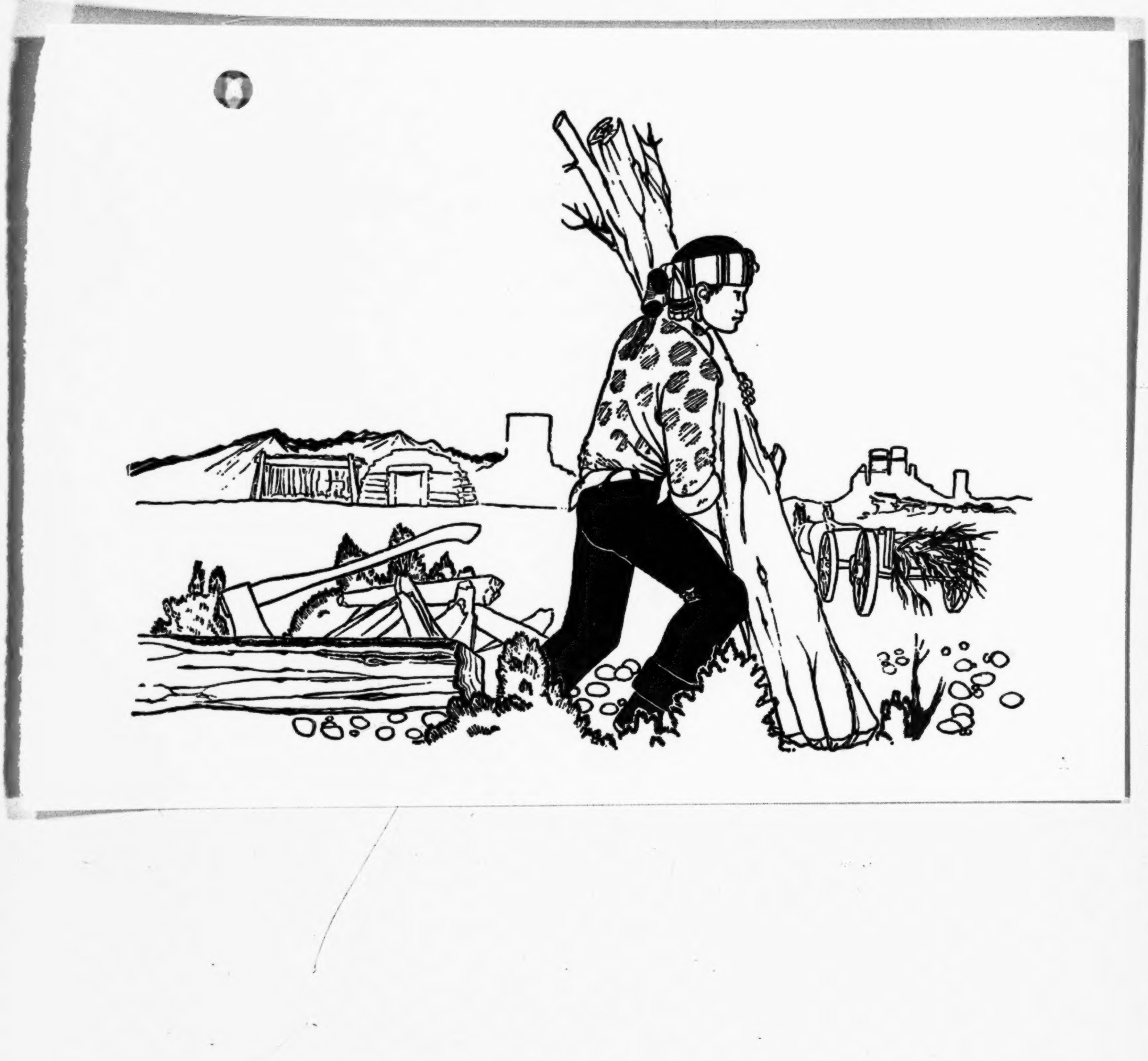
He hunts
  and he rides
  and he sings.

He coaxes the corn
  and the squash plants
  to grow
  out of the sand-dry earth.

My father has magic
  in his finger tips.

He can turn
  flat pieces of silver
  into things of beauty.

Sometimes
  I hide in the wide folds
  of my mother's skirts
  and look out at my father.



## POSSESSIONS

I have black hair.

I have white teeth.

My hands are brown
with many fingers.

My feet are brown
with many toes.

My arms are brown
and strong.

My legs are brown
and swift.

I have two eyes.

They show me how things look.

I have two ears.

They bring sounds
  to stay with me
  for a little while.

I have two names,
  a War Name
  for just me to know
  but not to use,
  and a nickname
  for everyone to use
  for everyday.

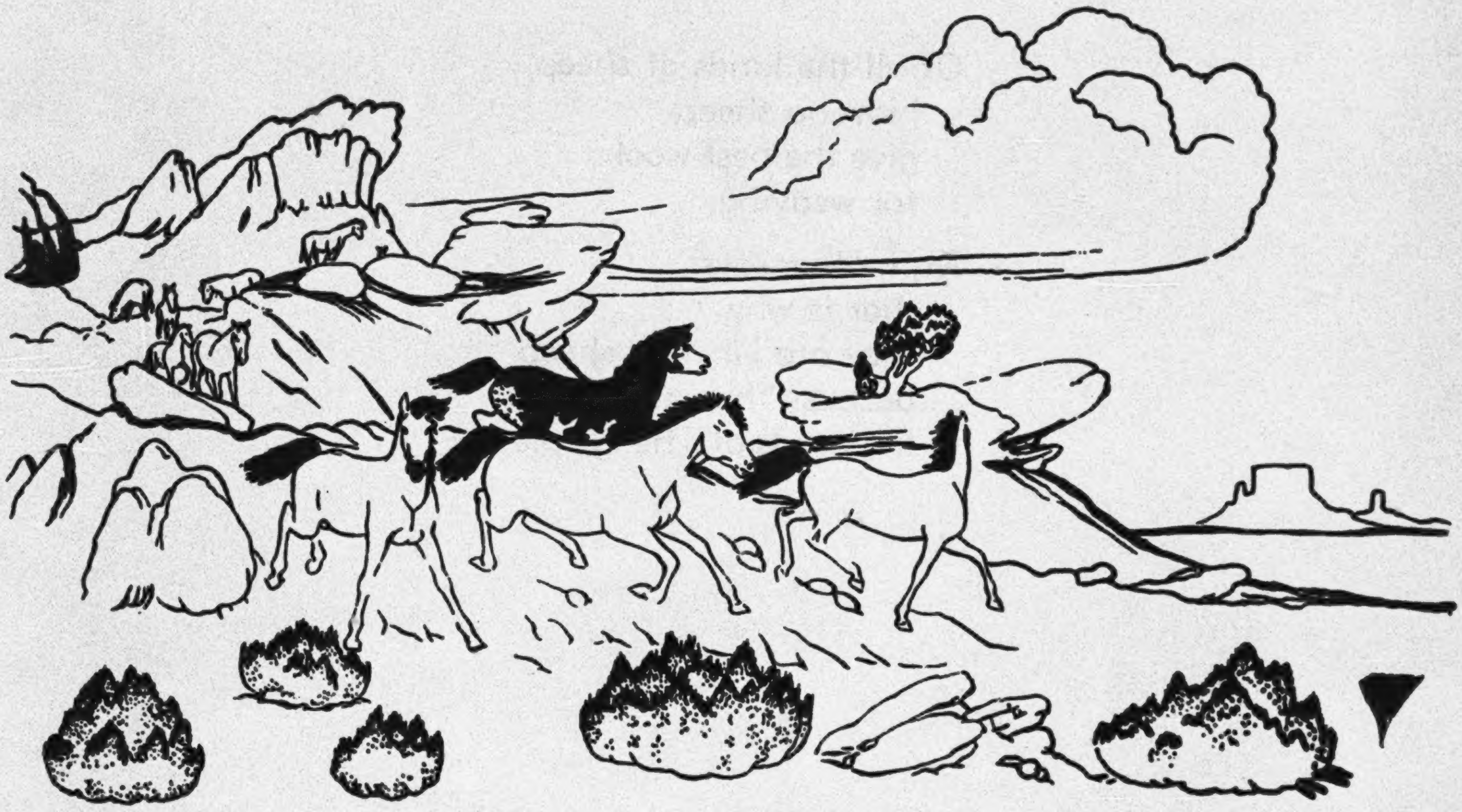
But with all these things
  I still am only
  one little girl.

Isn't it strange?

## THE HORSES

I see my father's horses
running in the wind.

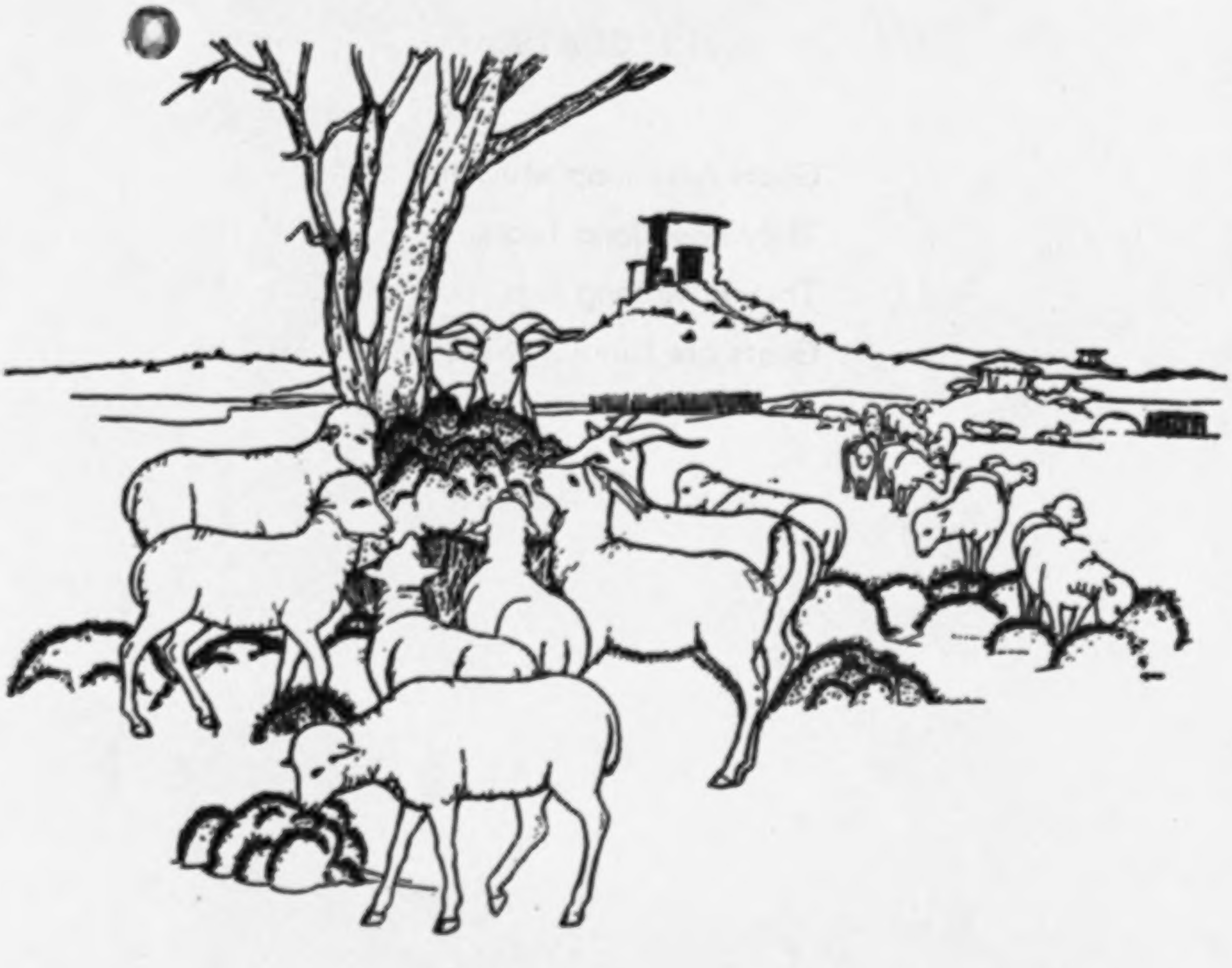
I feel little
standing here
when the wind
and the horses
run by.



## THE SHEEP

Of all the kinds of sheep,
Navaho sheep
give the best wool
for weaving.

My mother says
that is why
they are Navaho sheep,
because they know best
the needs of The People.



# THE GOATS

Goats have long whiskers.
They have long faces.
They have long legs.
Goats are funny, I think.

# THE LAMBS

Now that it is autumn,
   the lambs
   that were babies in the spring,
   have grown.

They are almost as tall
   as their mothers.

My father takes the lambs
   in his wagon
   to the trading post.

He takes them to sell
   to the trader.

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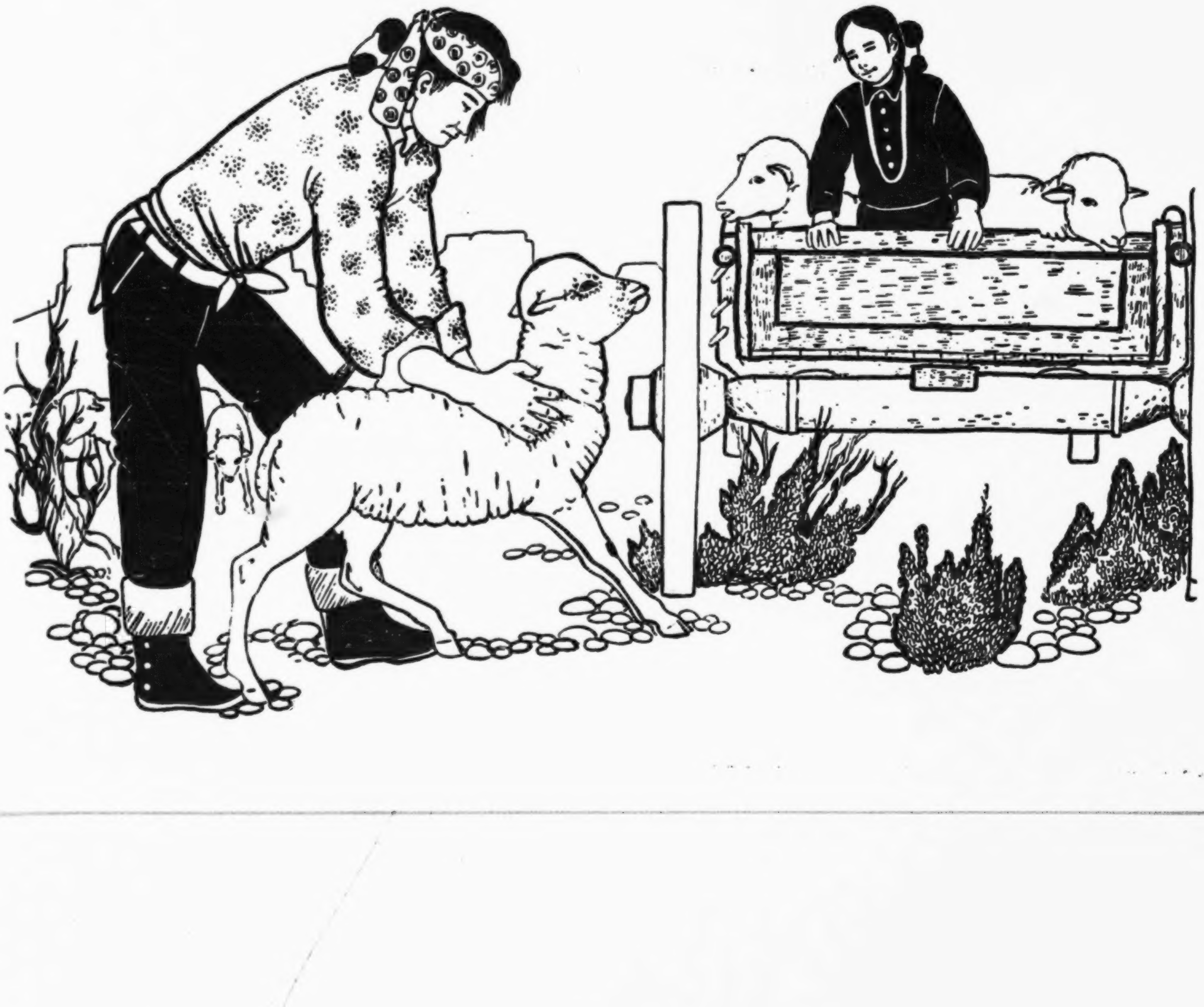


## THE TRADING POST

⑪

Hosteen White Man
  has the trading post.

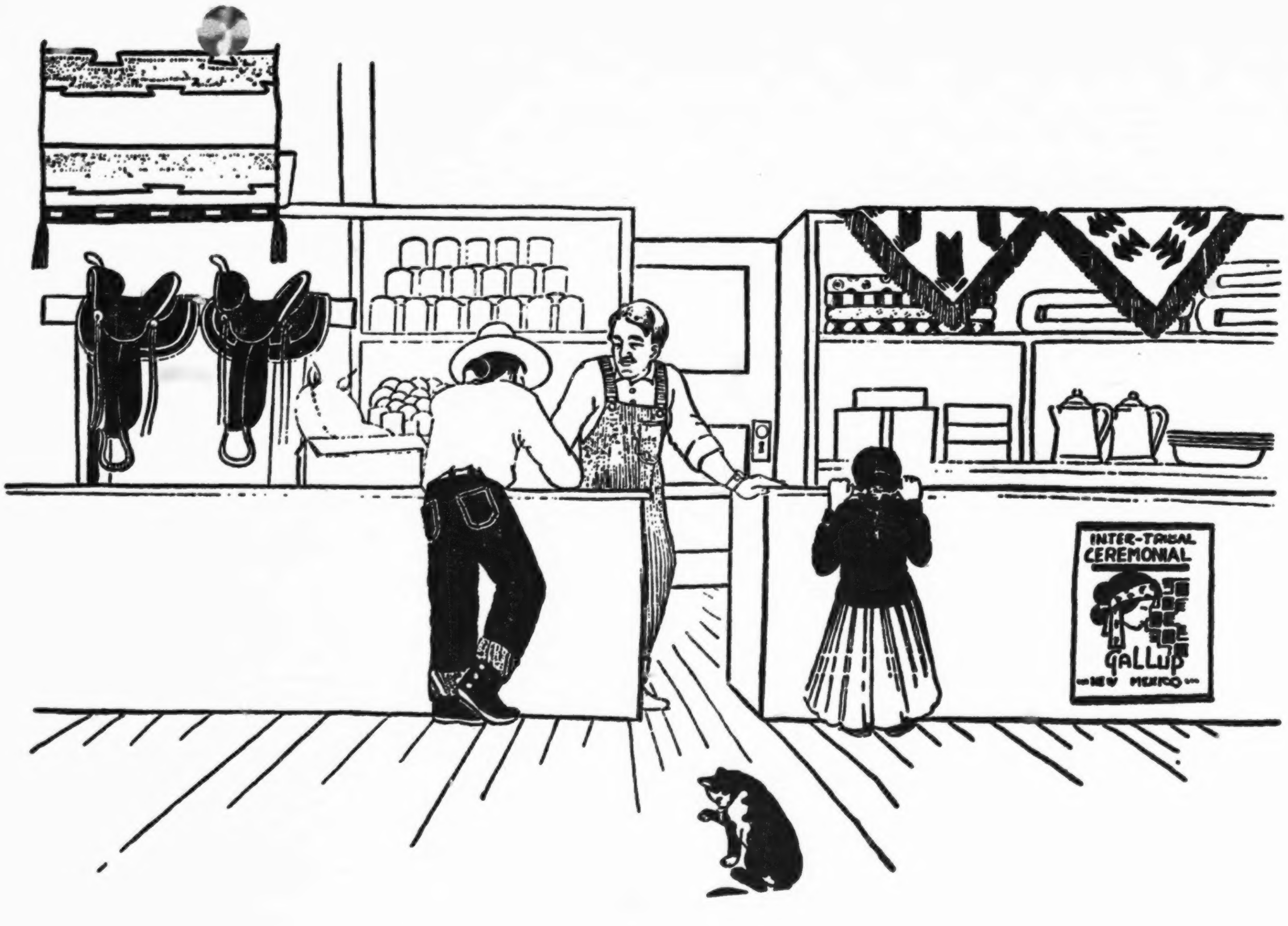
He has hard things on the shelf.

He has soft things on the wall.

And in a jar
  he has red stick candy
  that he keeps just for me.

Hosteen White Man
  at the trading post
  is such a good man.

Sometimes, I forget he is not
  one of The People.


INTER-TRIBAL CEREMONIAL
GALLUP
NEW MEXICO

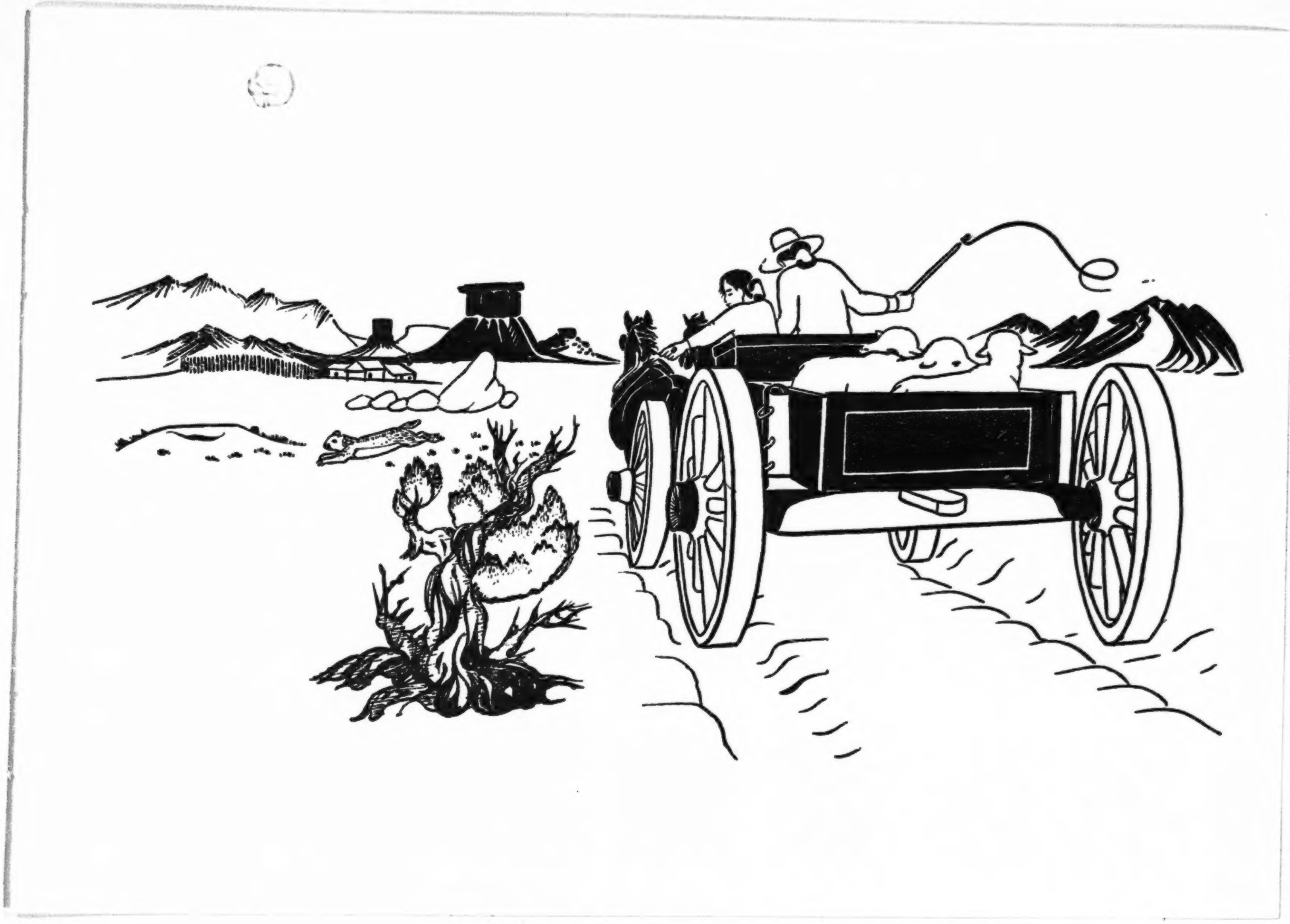
## SELLING

In his wagon
my father drives
to the trading post.

He takes the lambs
and he takes me, too.

He wants me to know
about selling.

He tells me that sometimes
he trades the lambs,
and sometimes
he gives them in payment
for a debt.



This time
he will sell them
to the trader.

When we get to the trading post
the trader looks at the lambs.

Then he tells my father
how much he will pay.

I wonder if the lambs
like to have my father
sell them to the trader.

My father sells the lambs
for hard round money
to Hosteen White Man
at the trading post.

Then he chooses cans of food
to put into his wagon,
and he gives Hosteen White Man
some of the round hard money
back again.

My father calls this selling,
but I think
it is a game
they play together,
Hosteen White Man and
my father at the trading post.

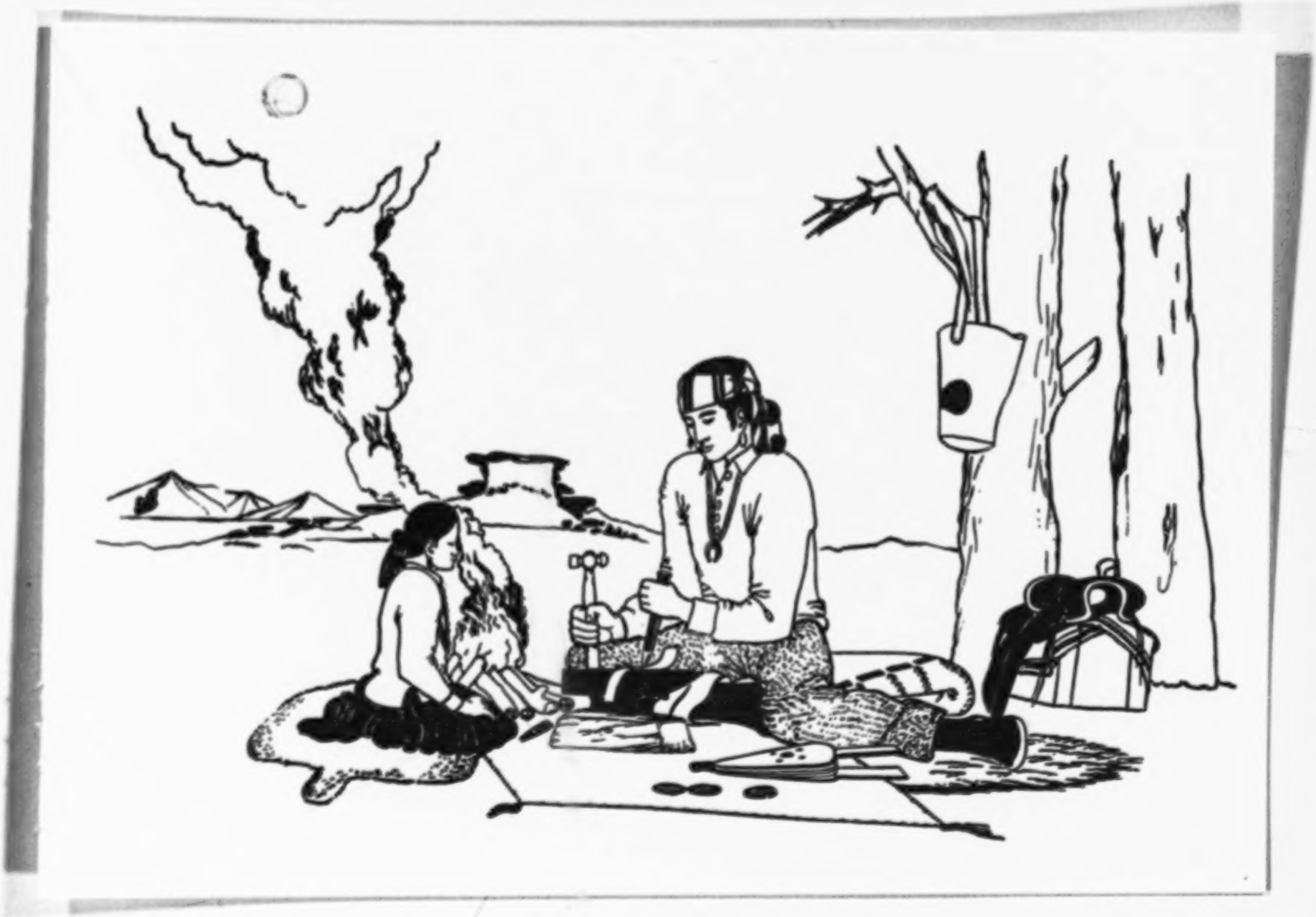
My father likes
this game of selling.

He did not tell me,
but, someway,
I know
that he likes it.

## THE SILVERSMITH

My father sits before his forge
melting bars of silver
and turning them
into silver raindrops
and silver cloud designs.

Somehow,
my father has caught the wind
within his bellows
and when he lets it go
its breath
turns the silver
to red earth color.



Its breath ①
cools the silver
until it is hard
like something made
of gray water
and then turned to stone.

Today
my father sang
as he worked
at making a bracelet
for my arm.

His song
flowed into the silver circle
making it a circle of song.

D

## TURQUOISE

Turquoise is sky.

Turquoise is still water.

Turquoise is color-blue
and color-green
that someone
somewhere
has caught
and turned to stone.

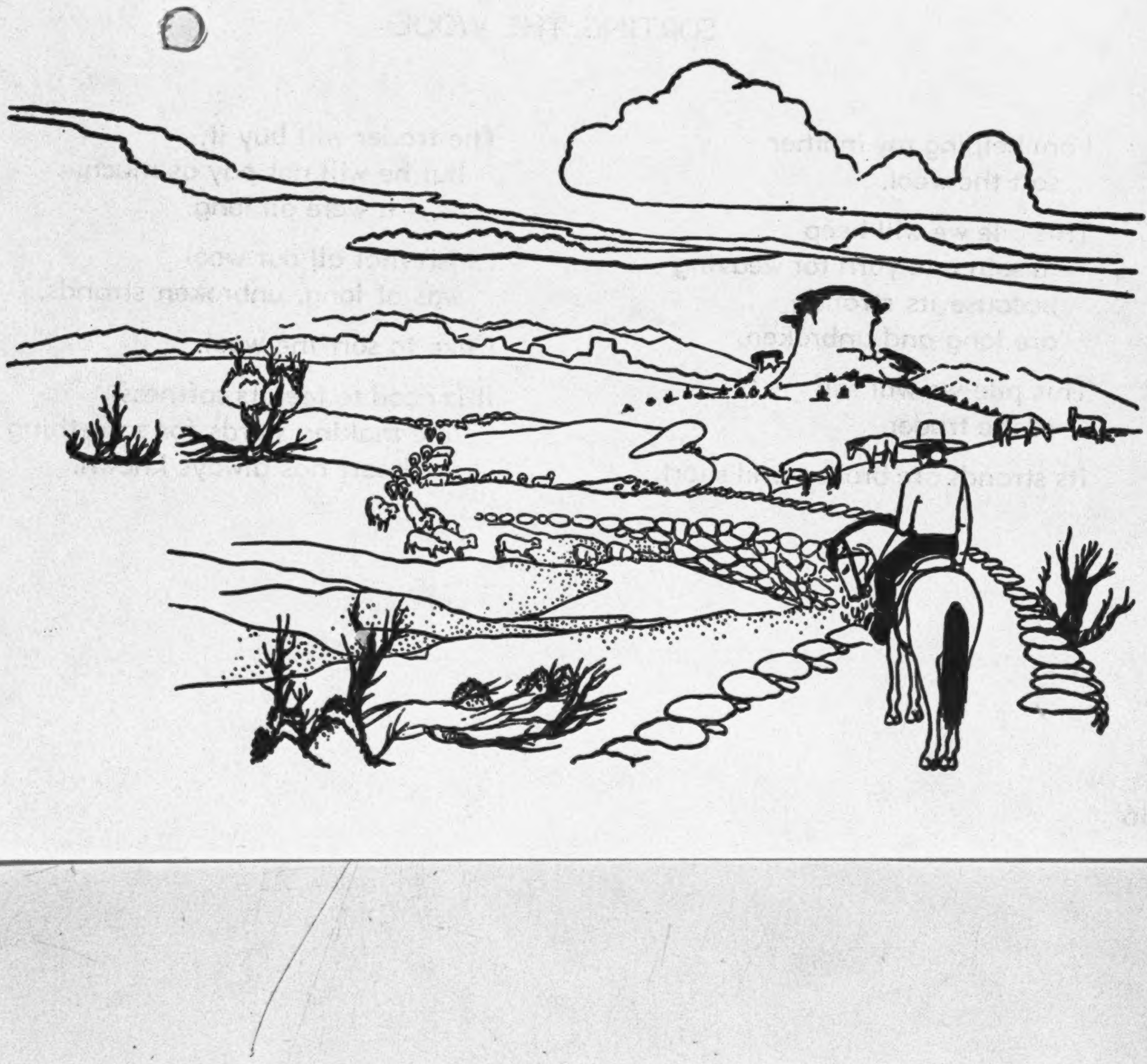
Sometimes, turquoise
is trapped in silver,
and sometimes, in small beads
running along a white string
like beauty following
a straight trail.

# IT IS DRY

My father says
over and over,
"It is dry.

It is too dry."

My father means
there has been no rain
to fill the rain pools
for the thirsty sheep.



## SORTING THE WOOL

I am helping my mother
sort the wool.

This pile we will keep
to spin into yarn for weaving
because its strands
are long and unbroken.

This pile we will sell
to the trader.

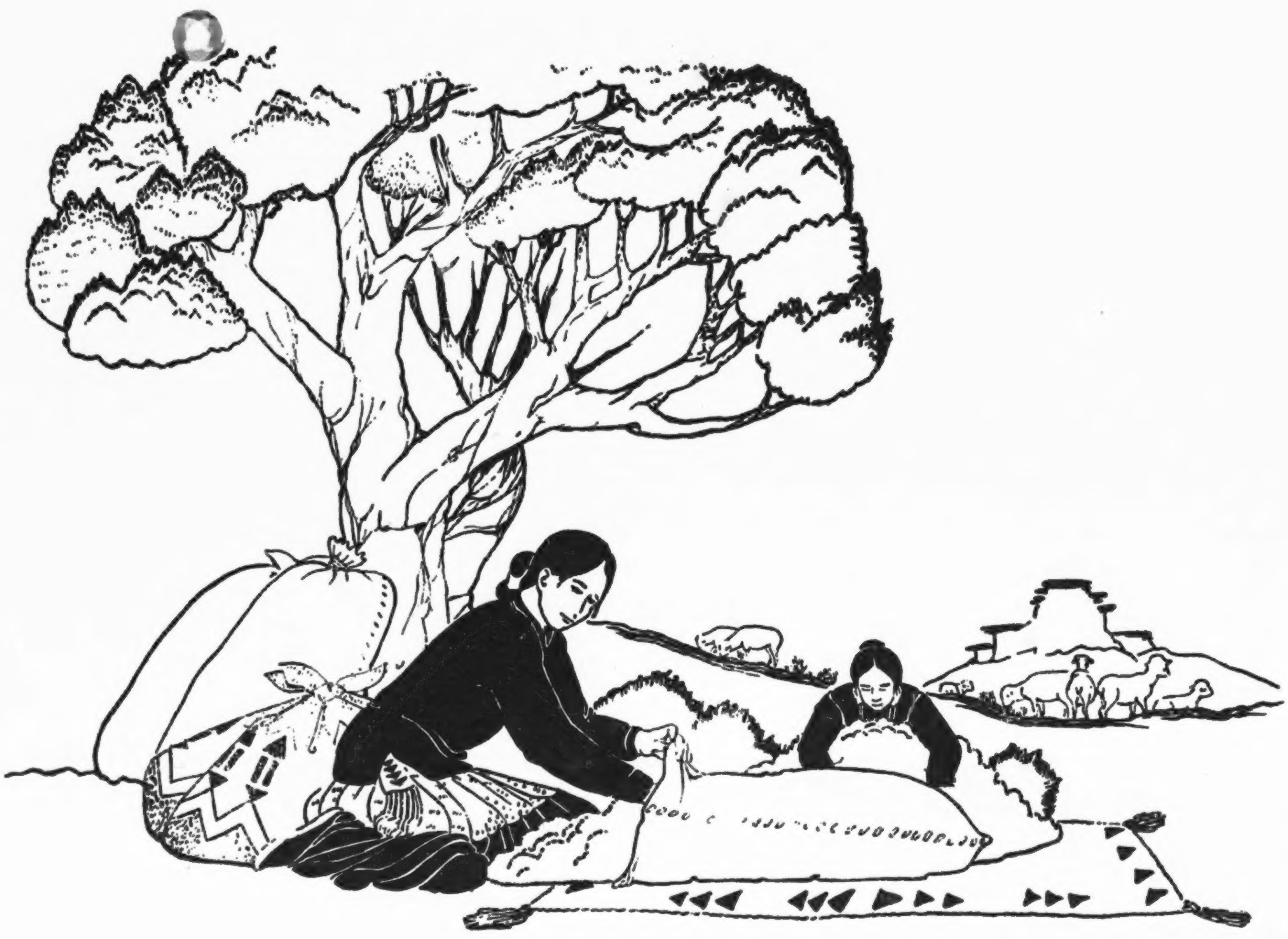
Its strands are broken and short.

The trader will buy it,
but he will not pay as much
as if it were all long.

I wish that all our wool
was of long, unbroken strands.

I like to sort the wool.

It is good to feel its softness,
like making words for something
my heart has always known.



# CLEANING THE WOOL

I go with my mother
to beat the wool.

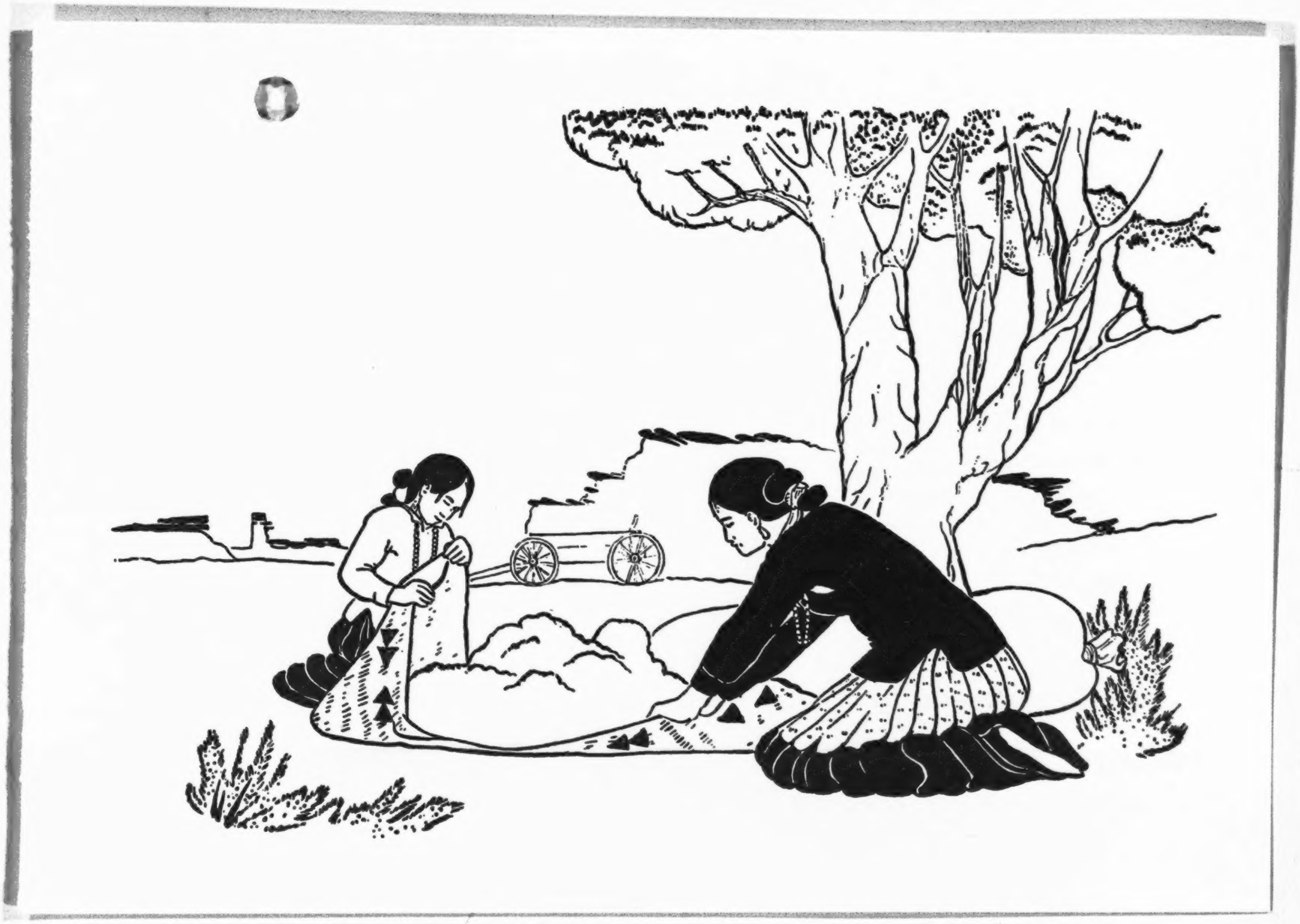
We get the little sticks
and burrs out of it.

We put the wool
on a flat rock.

We beat the wool
with yucca sticks.

I have a little yucca stick
like my mother's big one.

It takes my mother and me
a long time to clean the wool.



# CARDING THE WOOL

I sit with my mother
  under the juniper tree.

I watch her card wool
  with her towcards.

My mother's towcards
  are flat pieces of wood
  with strong handles
  and with wire teeth.

My mother buys her towcards
  from the trader
  at the trading post.

With her towcards
  she pulls the wool thin.

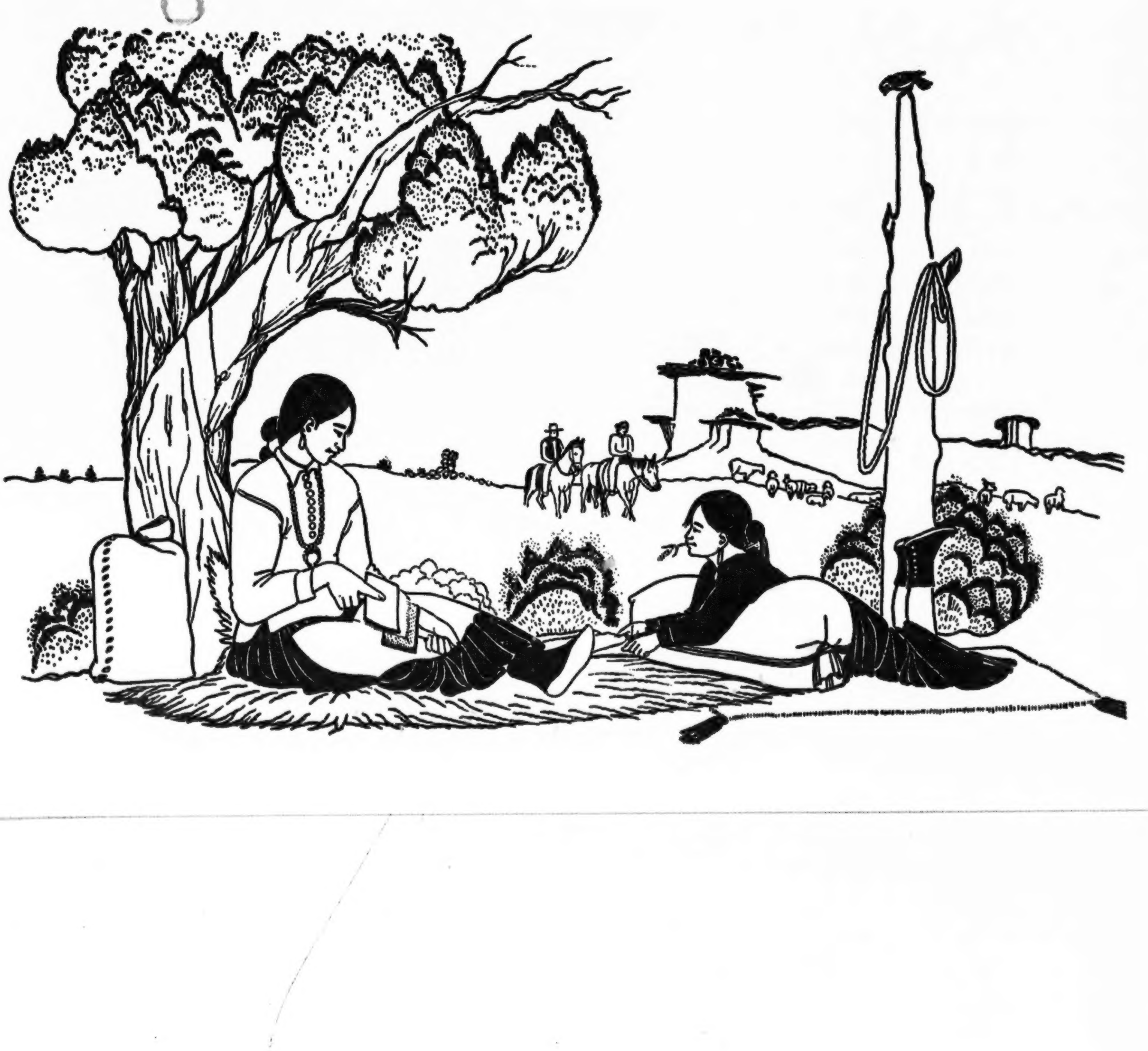
She stretches it in white sheets
  like snow mist in winter.

She bunches it in soft rolls
  like white clouds in summer.

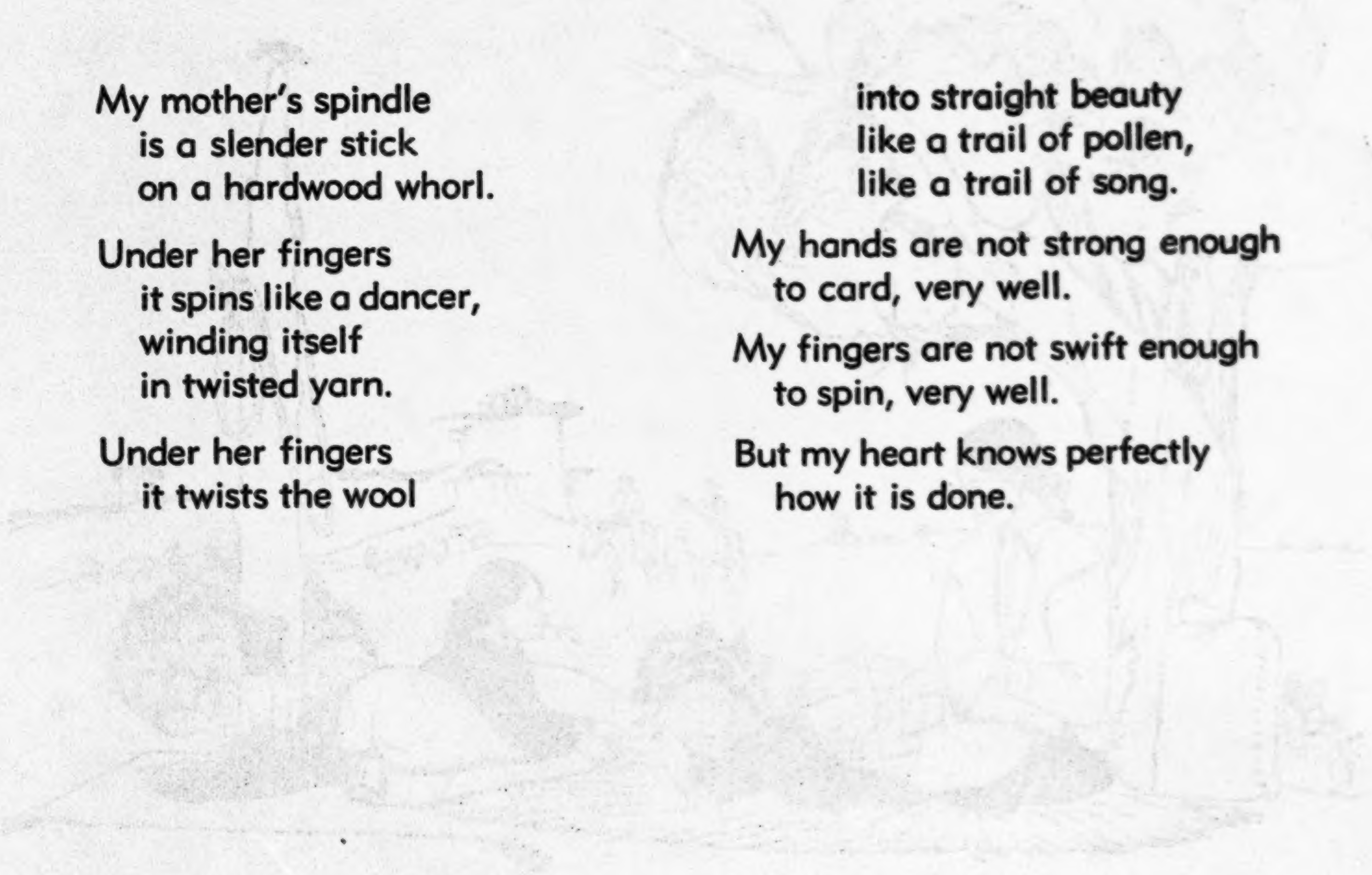
Under my mother's towcards
  the gray wool turns white.

The matted wool turns fluffy
  and soft,
  and light as baby eagle down.

I like to sit with my mother
  under the juniper tree.
I like to watch her card the wool
  with her towcards.



# SPINNING



My mother's spindle
is a slender stick
on a hardwood whorl.

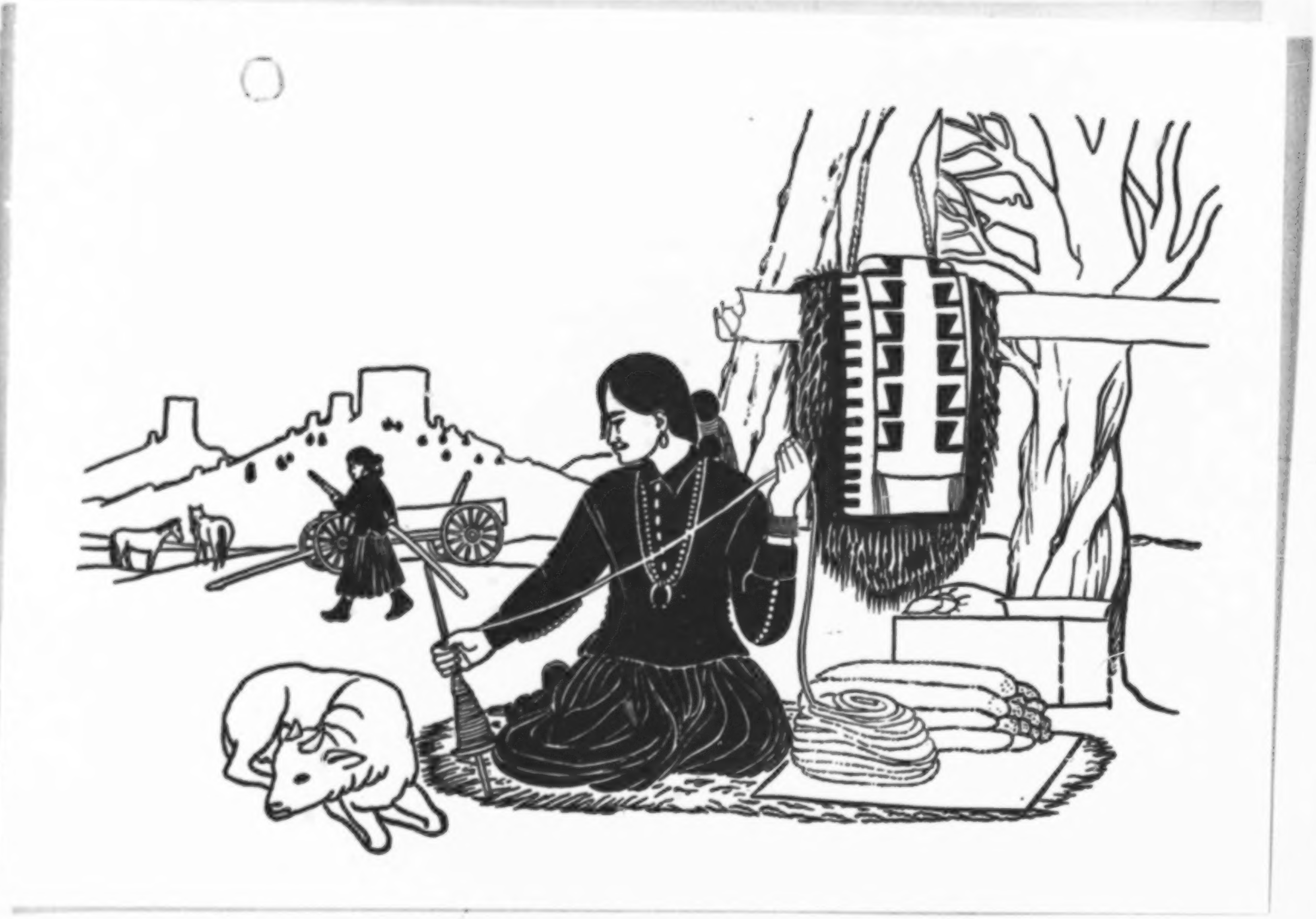
Under her fingers
it spins like a dancer,
winding itself
in twisted yarn.

Under her fingers
it twists the wool
into straight beauty
like a trail of pollen,
like a trail of song.

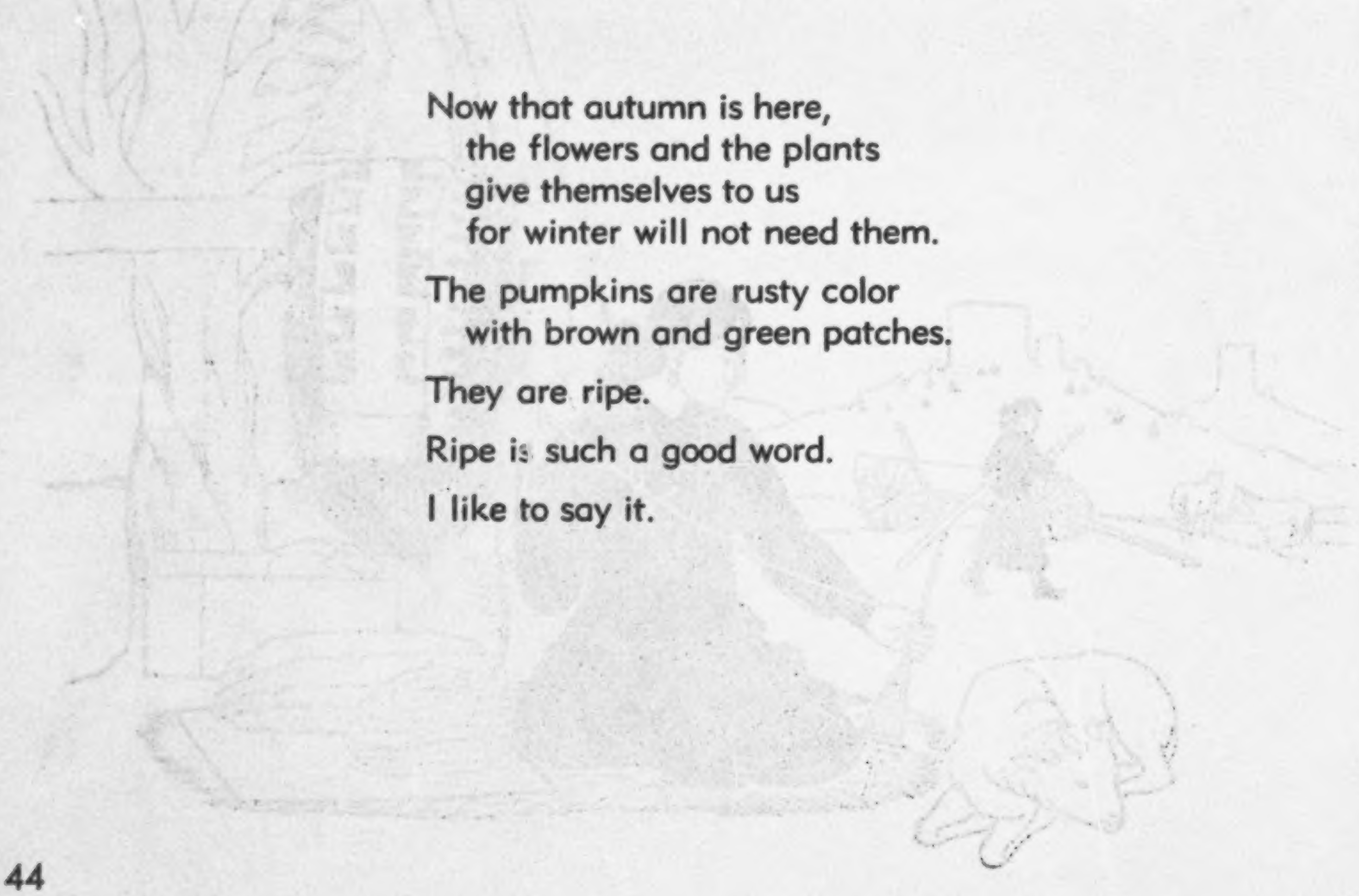
My hands are not strong enough
to card, very well.

My fingers are not swift enough
to spin, very well.

But my heart knows perfectly
how it is done.



# AUTUMN



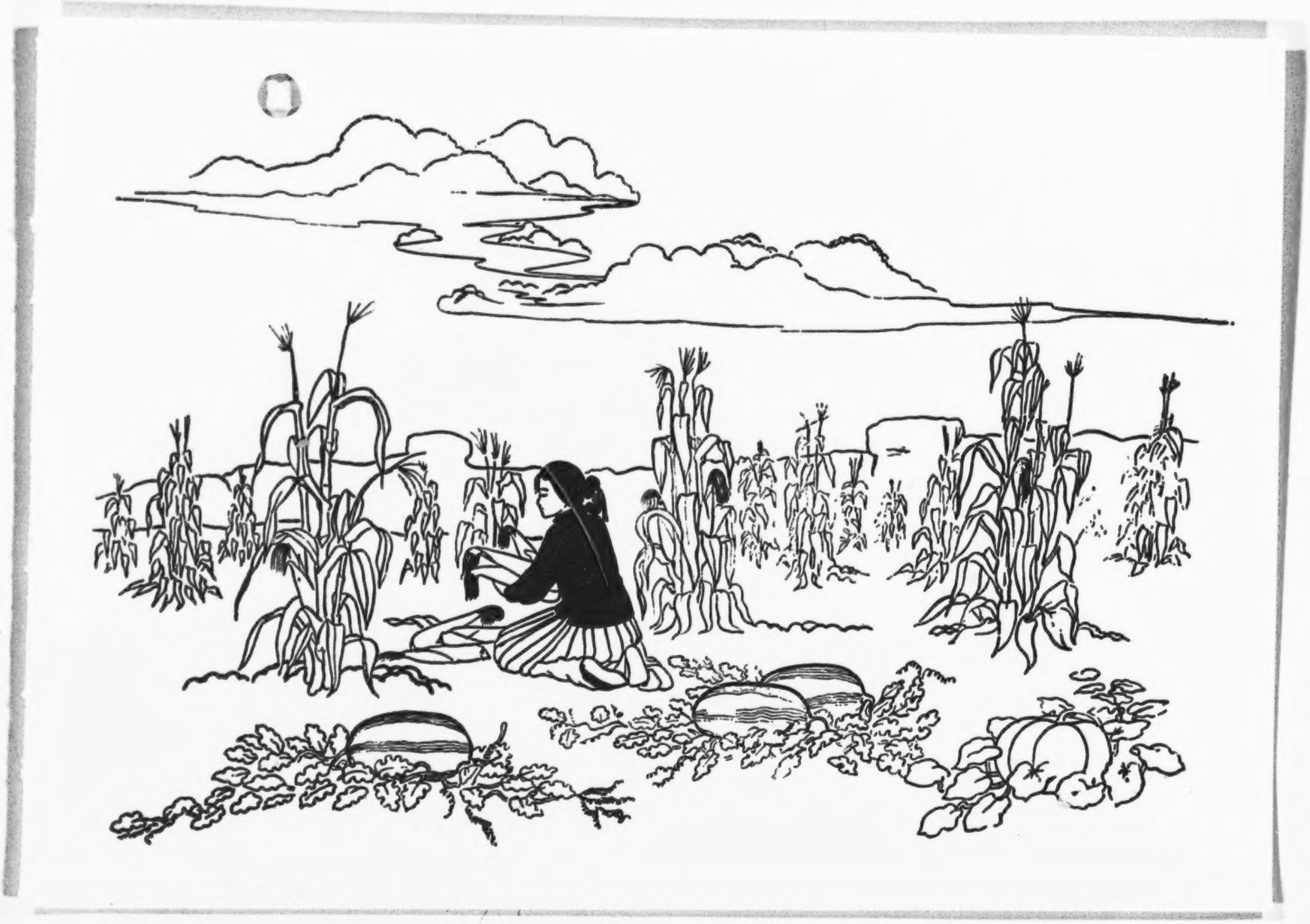
Now that autumn is here,
   the flowers and the plants
   give themselves to us
   for winter will not need them.

The pumpkins are rusty color
   with brown and green patches.

They are ripe.

Ripe is such a good word.

I like to say it.



All the plants are ripe
and beautiful with color
now that autumn is here.

Soon my mother will go
to the mountains
to gather plants for dyes,
and plants for food,
and plants for medicine.

If I were bigger
she would take me with her.

She does take me
when we go
to places near the hogan.

After heavy frost
my father will go
to the mountains
to gather the pinyons.

This year he will go without us.

He will go with some other men
in a truck
that belongs to the trader.

My mother does not like this.

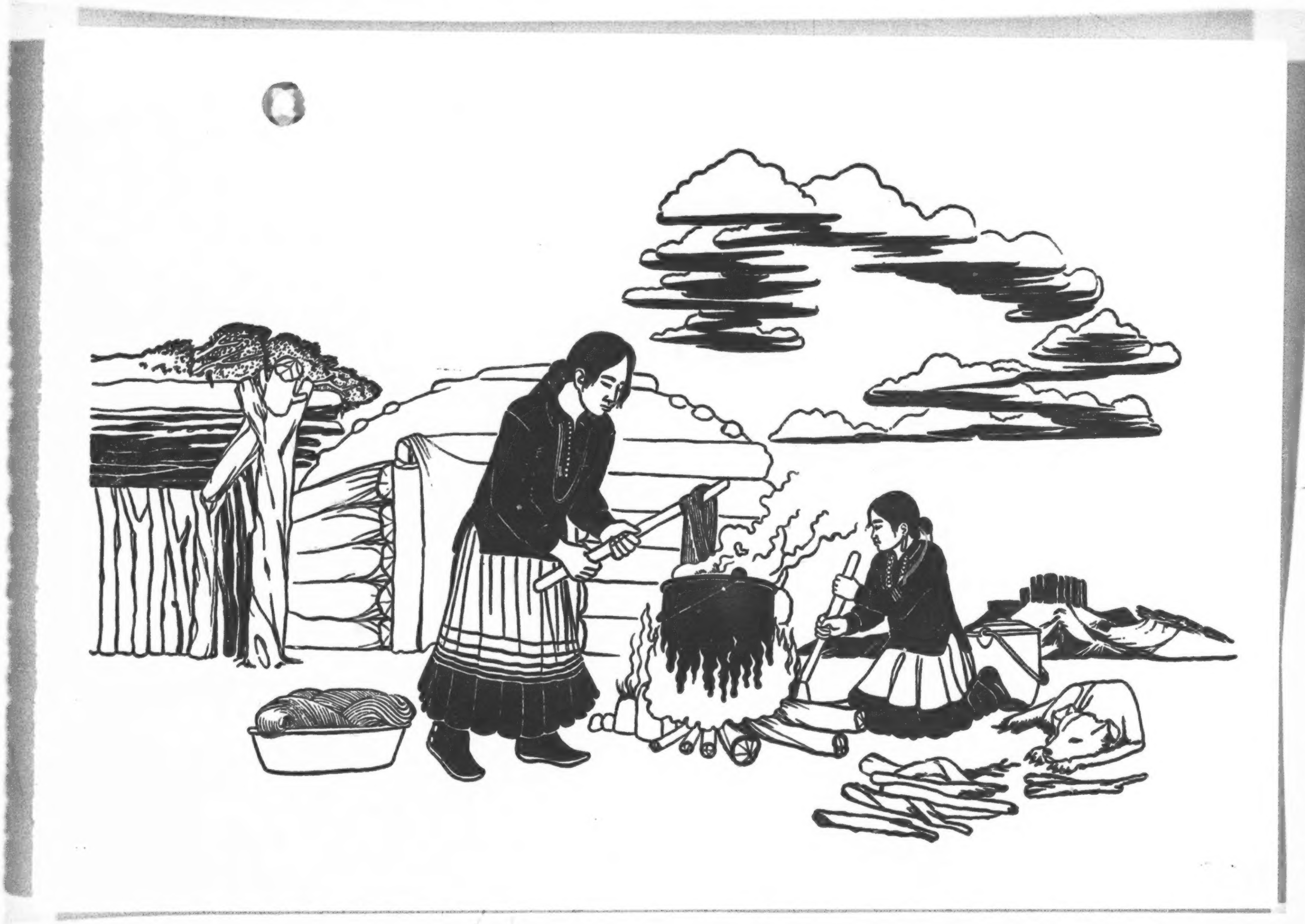
She thinks
my father should take us
with him
when he goes for pinyons.

## DYEING

With flower plants
and bark and roots
and minerals and water
and fire,
my mother changes
the colors of her yarns.

My mother puts the dye plants
into the dye kettle
over the fire.

Slowly the water
in the kettle
changes its color.



My mother puts white yarn
into this dye water.

She boils it over the fire.

She stirs it with a stick.

It bubbles and bubbles.

It gives a good smell
like plants after rain.

For a little time
my mother boils the yarn
in the dye water,
and then she takes it out again.

It is no longer white.

It has changed to color.

In this way
my mother changes the colors
of her yarns
to look like
brown earth in morning
or yellow sand at mid-day.

She changes the colors
of her yarns
to look like
black cliffs at sunset,
or black like the night,
and black like the dark clouds
of male rain.

I help [illegible] gather the flowers
and the bark and the roots
and the minerals.

I help to carry the water
from the rain pool
by the red rocks.

I help to make the fire
with little twigs.

I look and look.

I see the water and the plants.

I see the yarn in the water
but I do not see
the magic
that I think
my mother must use
to change her yarns
to colors.

When I tell this
to my mother,
she laughs at me.

She says she has no magic
in her dye kettle.

She says the plants
in her dye kettle
are the things
which give colors
to her yarns.

So now,
I have learned a new thing.

## WEAVING

When my mother sits
on her sheepskin,
weaving a blanket on her loom
I think it is like a song.

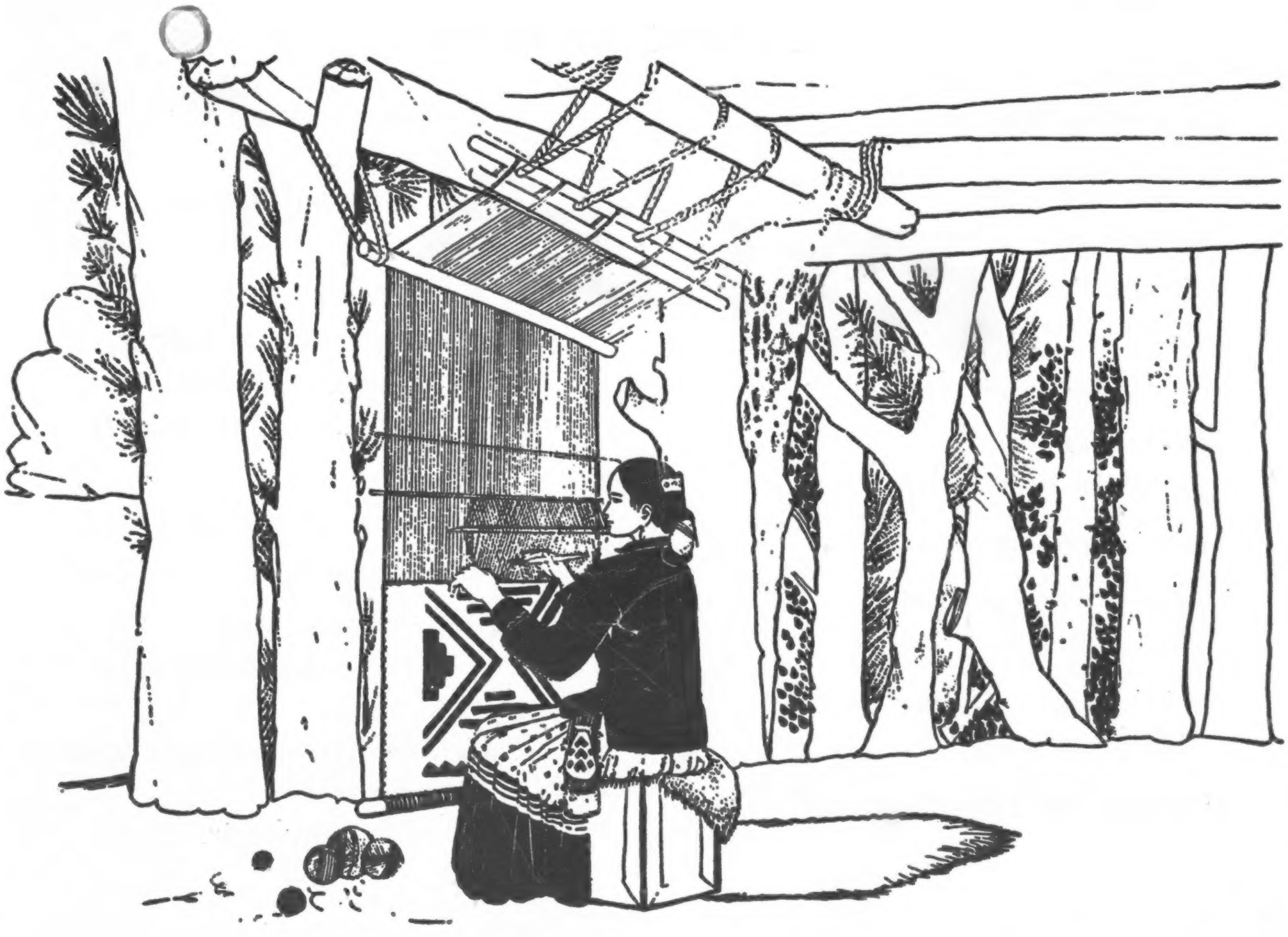
The warp threads
are the drum beats,
strong sounds
underneath.

The colored yarns
are the singing words
weaving through
the drum beats.

When the blanket is finished
it is like a finished song.

The warp
and the drum beats,
the colored wools
and the singing words
are forgotten.

Only
the pattern
of color
and of sound
is left.



## LEARNING TO WEAVE

My mother took me in her arms.

We sat together at her loom.

She took my hands
to guide them
along the weaving way.

She showed them how to weave.

We did not weave
straight across the loom.

That is not our way.

We wove with one color
for a little way up.

And then with another color
for a little way up.

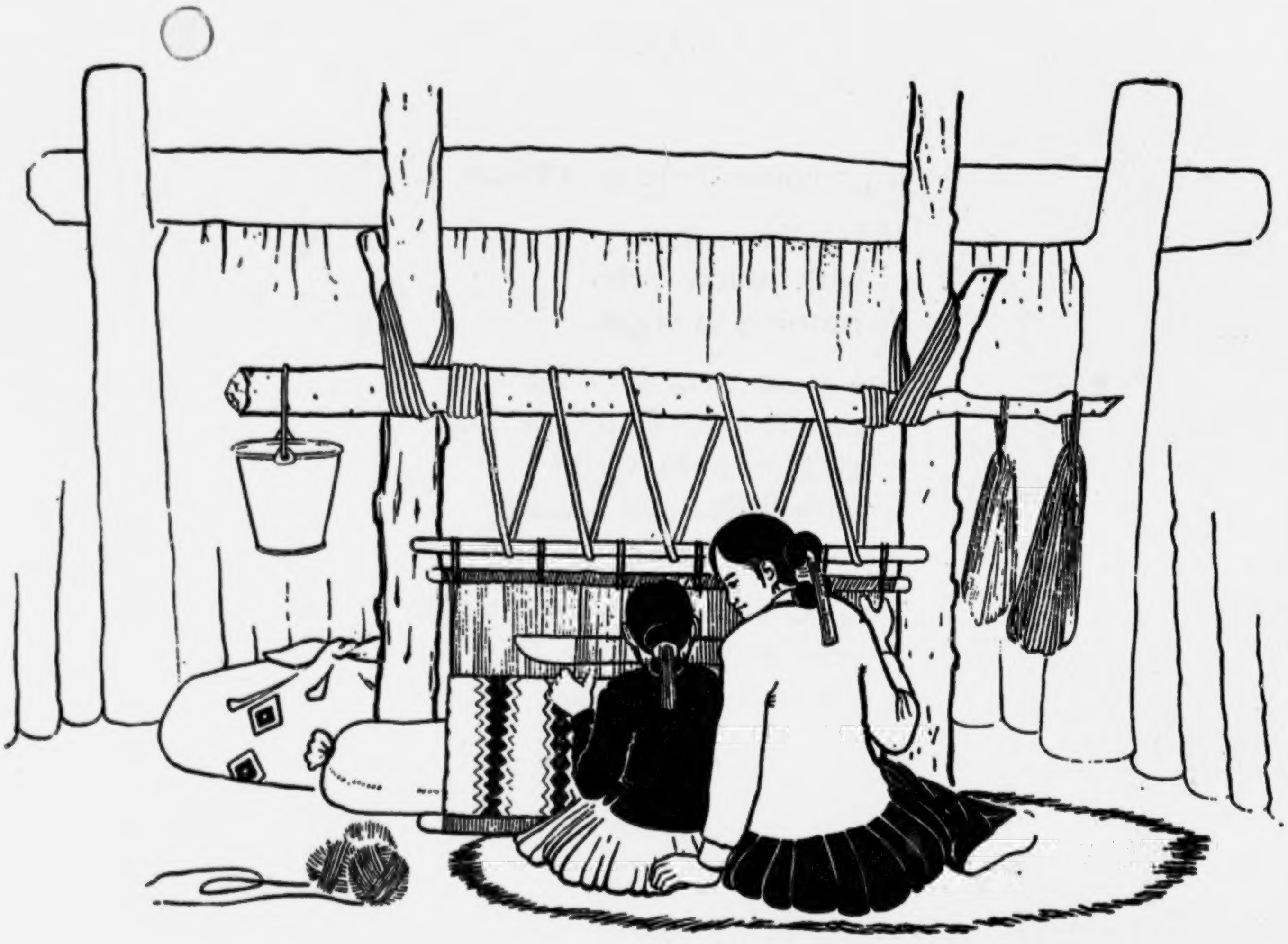
We kept the edges straight.

We wove not too tight
and not too loose
and pounded it down,
pounded it down,
pounded it.

But when I told my father,
"See, I wove this blanket,"
my mother spoke sharply.

"We do not say
things that are not true,"
she told me.

I hid my face away
from the sharp words of
my mother,
but soon my mother's hand
came gently
to touch my hair.



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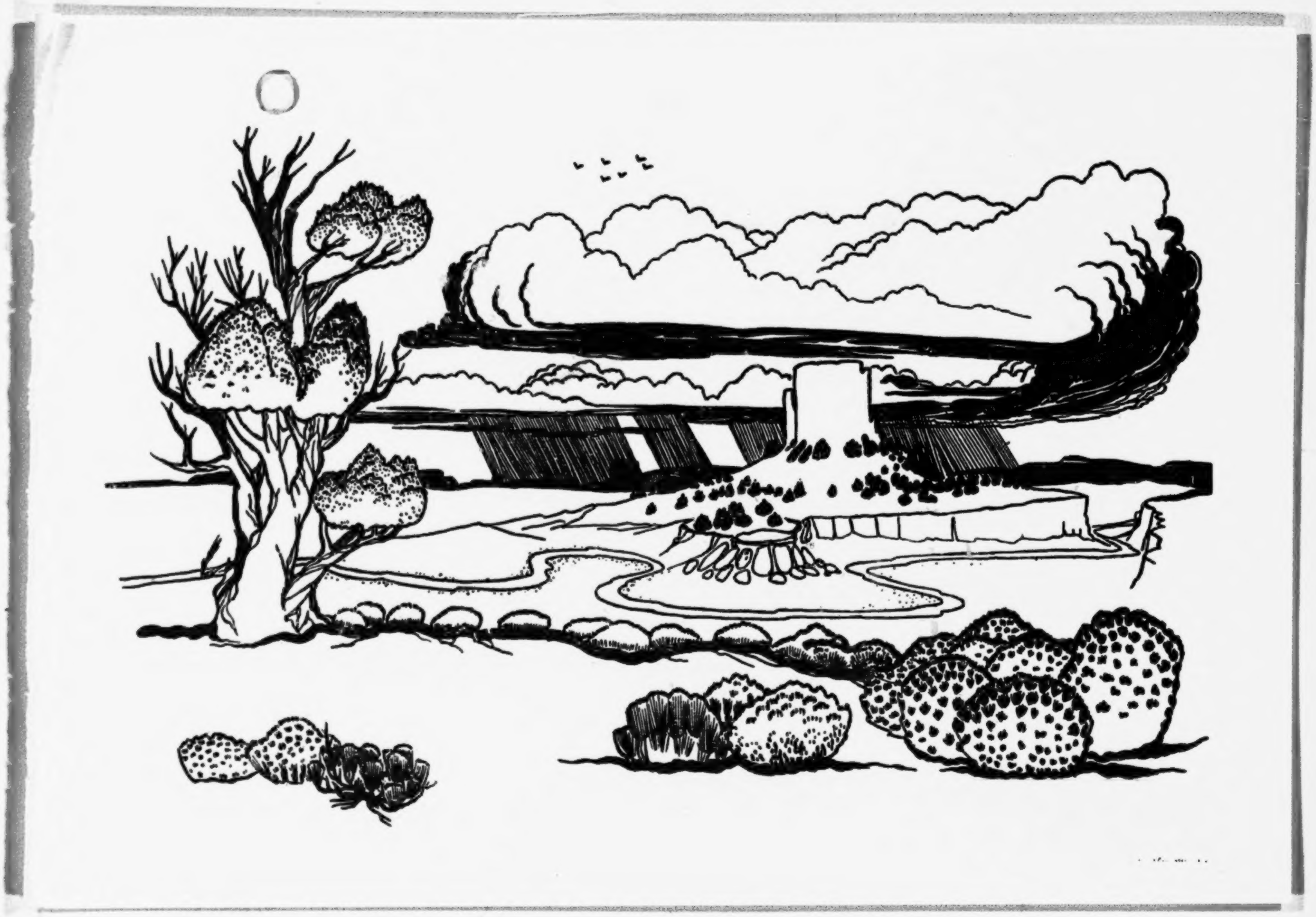
## FLOOD

Rain comes hard and black.

It fills the arroyos
with yellow water
running in anger.

Great pieces of sand bank
on the sides of the arroyos
slide into the water
with little tired noises
and are lost for always.

The rain pools fill with water,
rain water,
fresh and clean and cold.



# SUN

Sun comes now
to comfort the land
that the rain has frightened.

My father says,
"Sun takes the rain water
from the thirsty land
back to the sky too soon."

But my mother and I,
we are glad the sun comes soon.

Sun does not mean
to rob the land of water.

Sun means only to warm it again.

## HERDING

Today I go with my mother.

I go with her to drive the sheep
for I must learn to tend
the flock.

It is my work.

The way is long.

The sand is hot.

The arroyos are deep.

It takes many steps
to keep up with my mother.

It takes many steps
to keep up with the sheep.

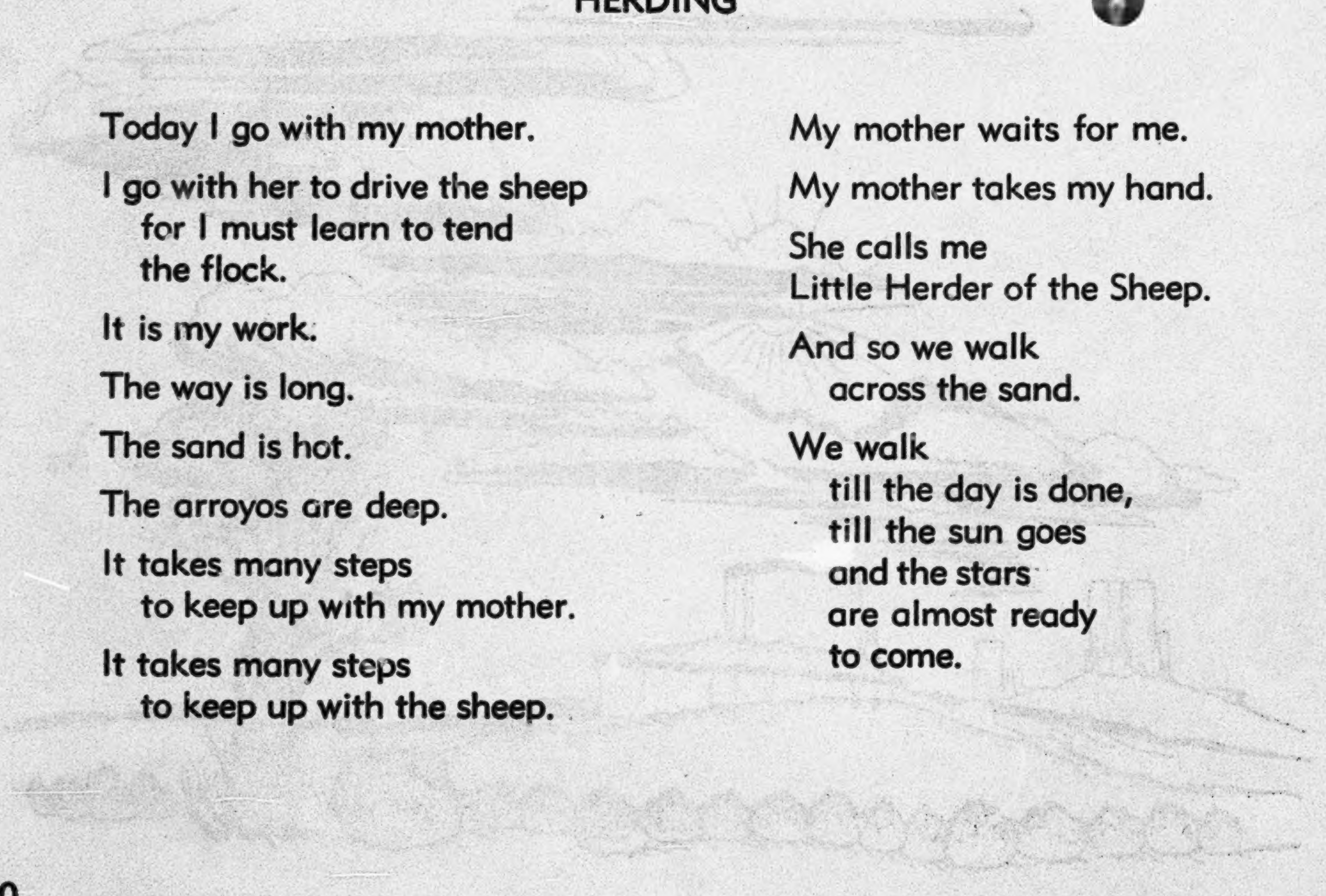
My mother waits for me.

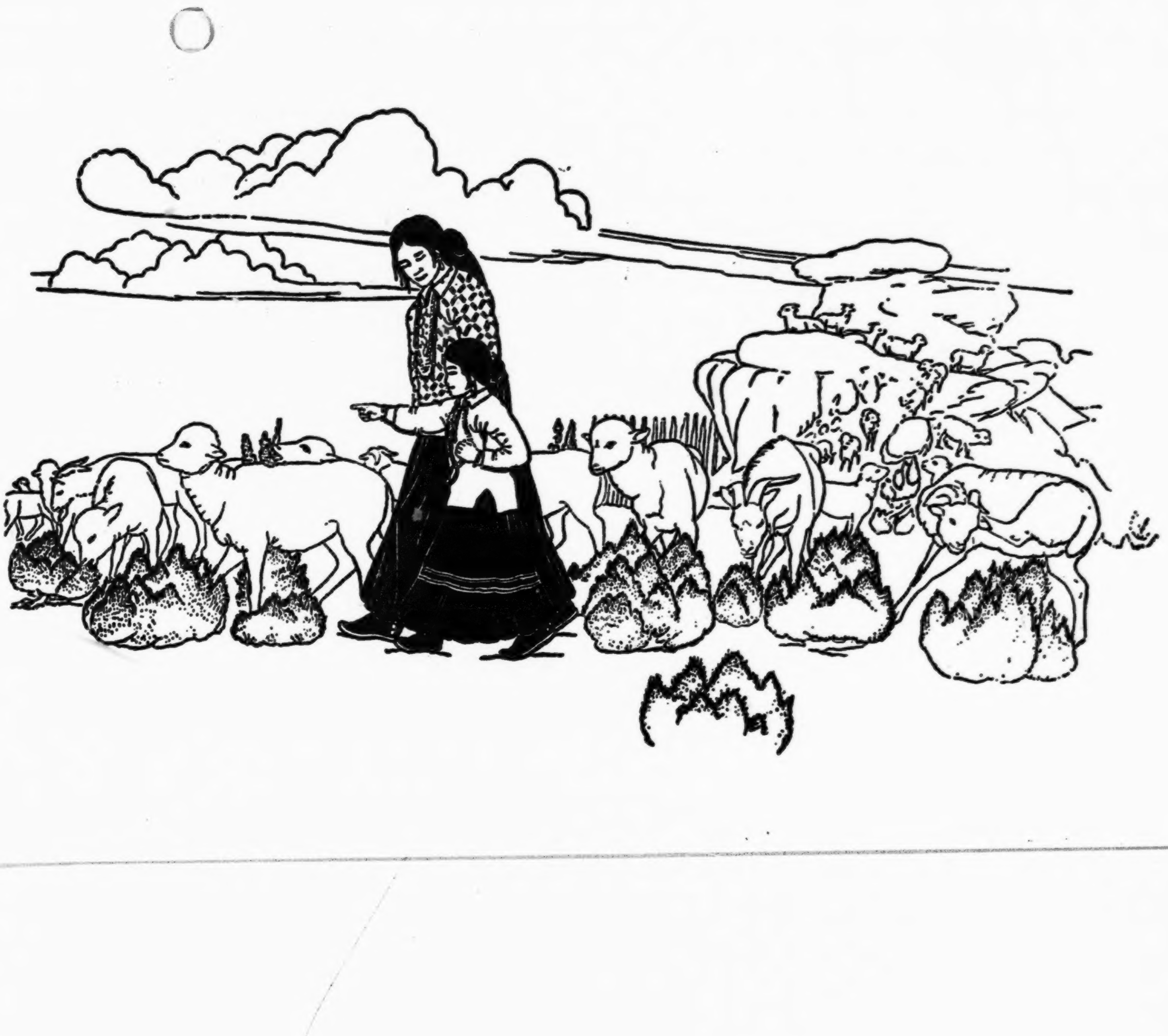
My mother takes my hand.

She calls me
Little Herder of the Sheep.

And so we walk
across the sand.

We walk
till the day is done,
till the sun goes
and the stars
are almost ready
to come.





We walk across the sand.

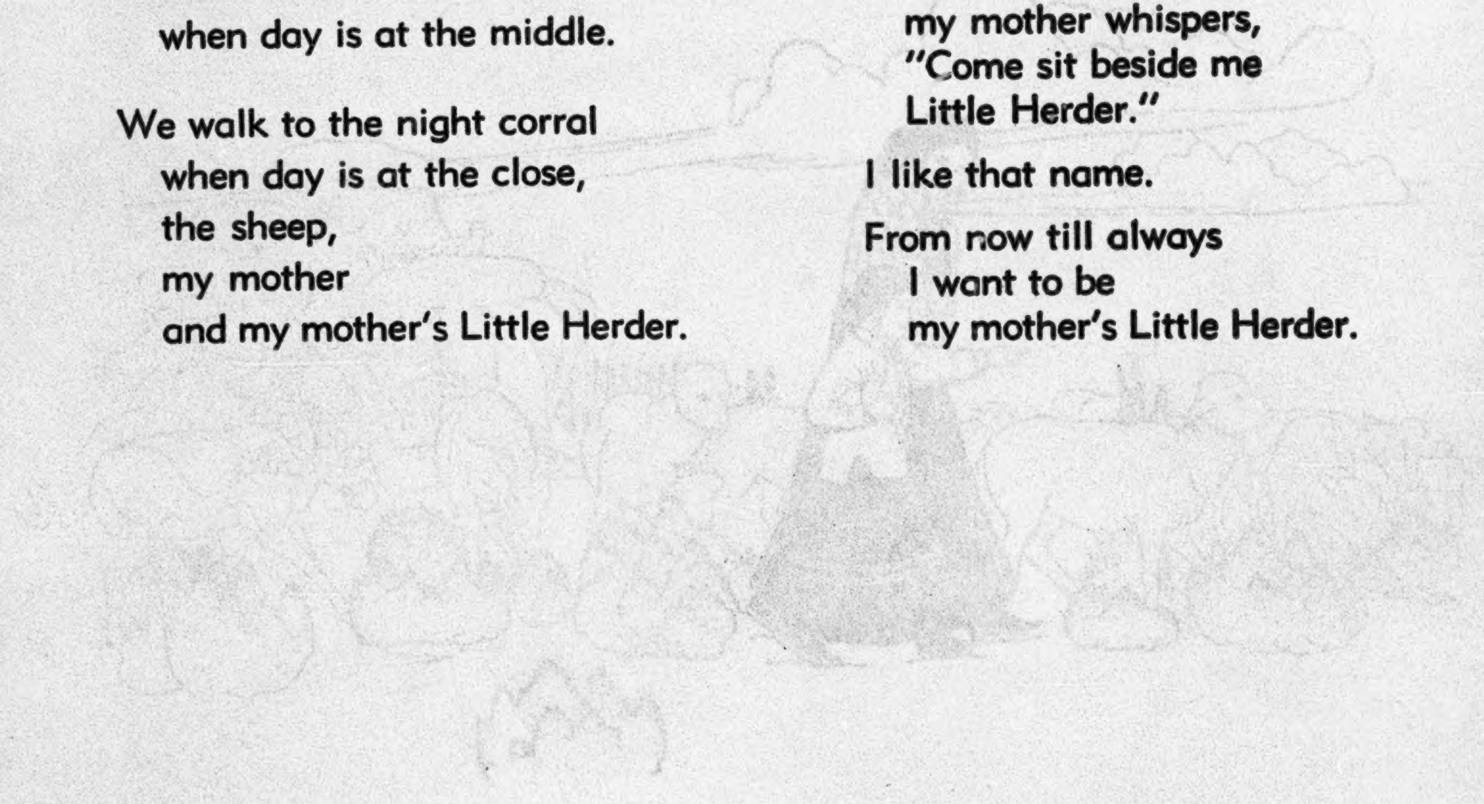
We walk to the water hole
   when day is at the middle.

We walk to the night corral
   when day is at the close,
   the sheep,
   my mother
   and my mother's Little Herder.

Before the hogan fi[illegible]
   when night has come,
   my father sings,
   my mother whispers,
   "Come sit beside me
   Little Herder."

I like that name.

From now till always
   I want to be
   my mother's Little Herder.



# LITTLE HERDER IN WINTER

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## ANN CLARK

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**UNITED STATES**
**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**
**BRANCH OF EDUCATION**
**BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

# LITTLE HERDER IN WINTER

## ANN CLARK

ILLUSTRATED BY

HOKE DENETSOSIE

A Publication of the Branch of Education
Bureau of Indian Affairs

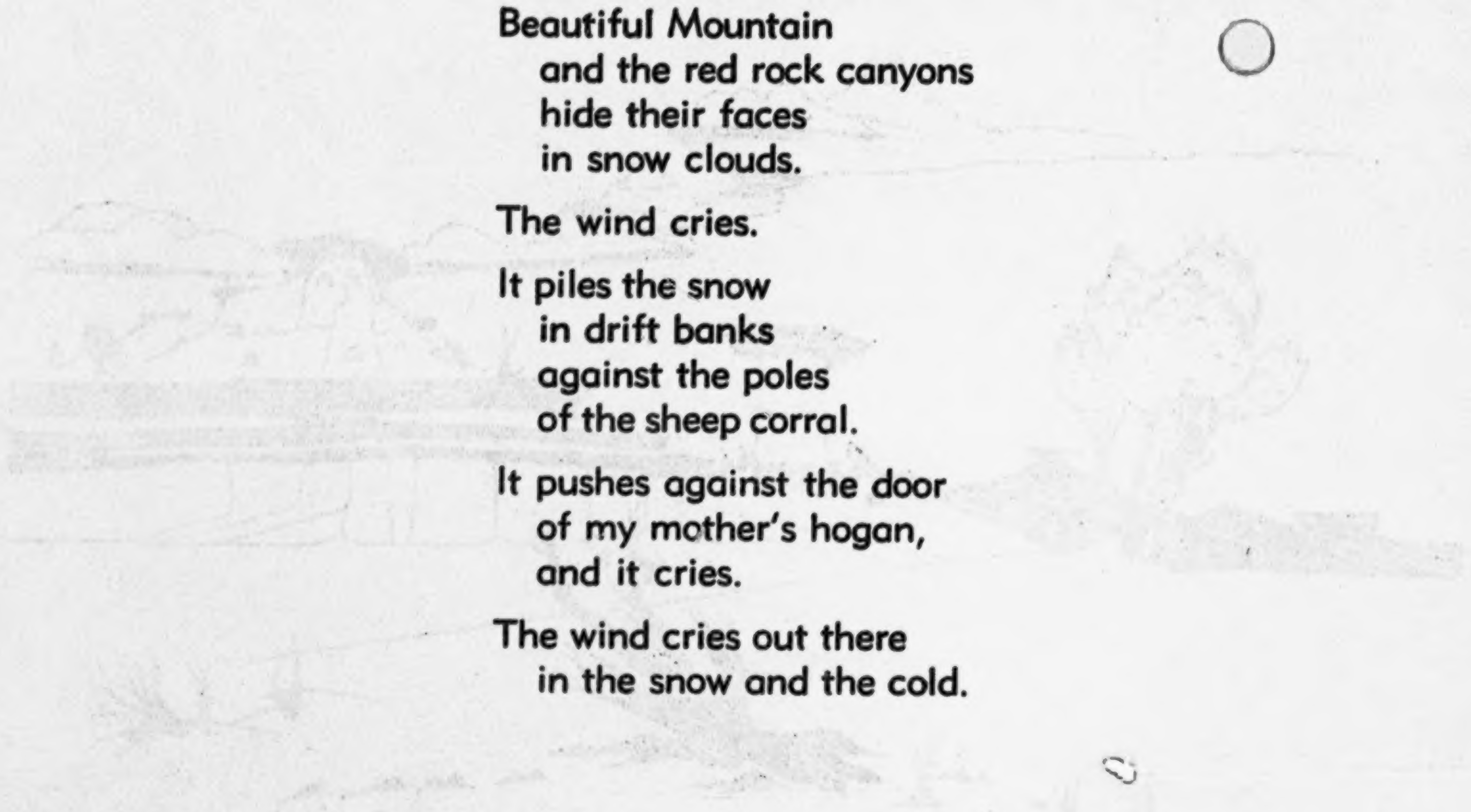
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## SNOW

My mother's land is white with snow.

The sandwash and the waterhole,
  the dry grass patches and the
  cornfield hide away
  under the white blanket,
  under the snow blanket
  that covers the land.

The air is filled
  with falling snow,
  thick snow,
  soft snow
  falling,
  falling.



Beautiful Mountain
  and the red rock canyons
  hide their faces
  in snow clouds.

The wind cries.

It piles the snow
  in drift banks
  against the poles
  of the sheep corral.

It pushes against the door
  of my mother's hogan,
  and it cries.

The wind cries out there
  in the snow and the cold.

My mother's hogan is cold.

Snow blows down the smoke hole.

Water drops on the fire.

The wet wood smokes
and keeps its flames to itself.

The sun
has not shown his face
to tell us
what time of day it is.

I do not like to ask my mother,
"Is it noon now?" or
"Is it almost night?"
because
she might think
I wanted it to be time to eat.

She might think
I wanted food.

## THERE IS NO FOOD

There is no food.

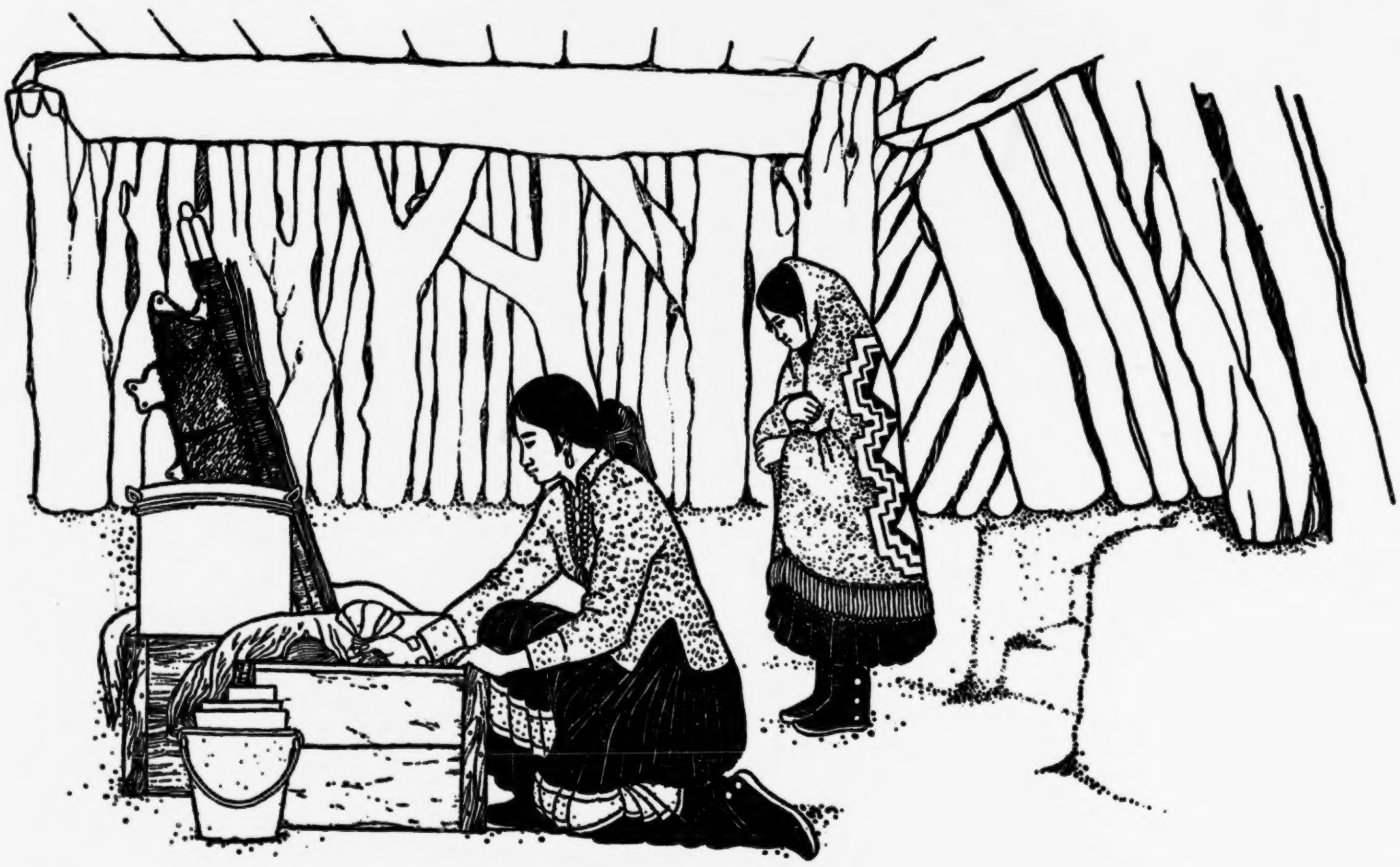
There is no flour nor cornmeal
  to make into bread.

There is no coffee
  that my mother could boil
  for us to drink.

There is no food.

The corn my father planted
  in his field
  is gone.

We ate it.



There was so little.

The corn pile in the storehouse
was not high enough
to last for long.

It is gone.

Now all of it is gone.

There is no food.

There is food
at the trading post
in sacks and in boxes,
in bins and in cans
on the shelf.

There is food at the trading post,
but the trading post
is far away
and snowdrifts
and snow clouds
are heavy between.

There is food at the trading post
but my father has nothing left
of the hard, round money
that he must give
to the trader
for the food.

There is no food here
in my mother's hogan.

When it is time to eat,
we talk of other things,
but not of hunger.

This thing called hunger
is a pain
that sits inside me.

At first it was little,
but now
it grows bigger
and bigger.

It hurts me
to be hungry.

# THE DOGS ARE HUNGRY

The dogs are hungry, too.

They crowd in the hogan.

The black one
   is not sleeping now.

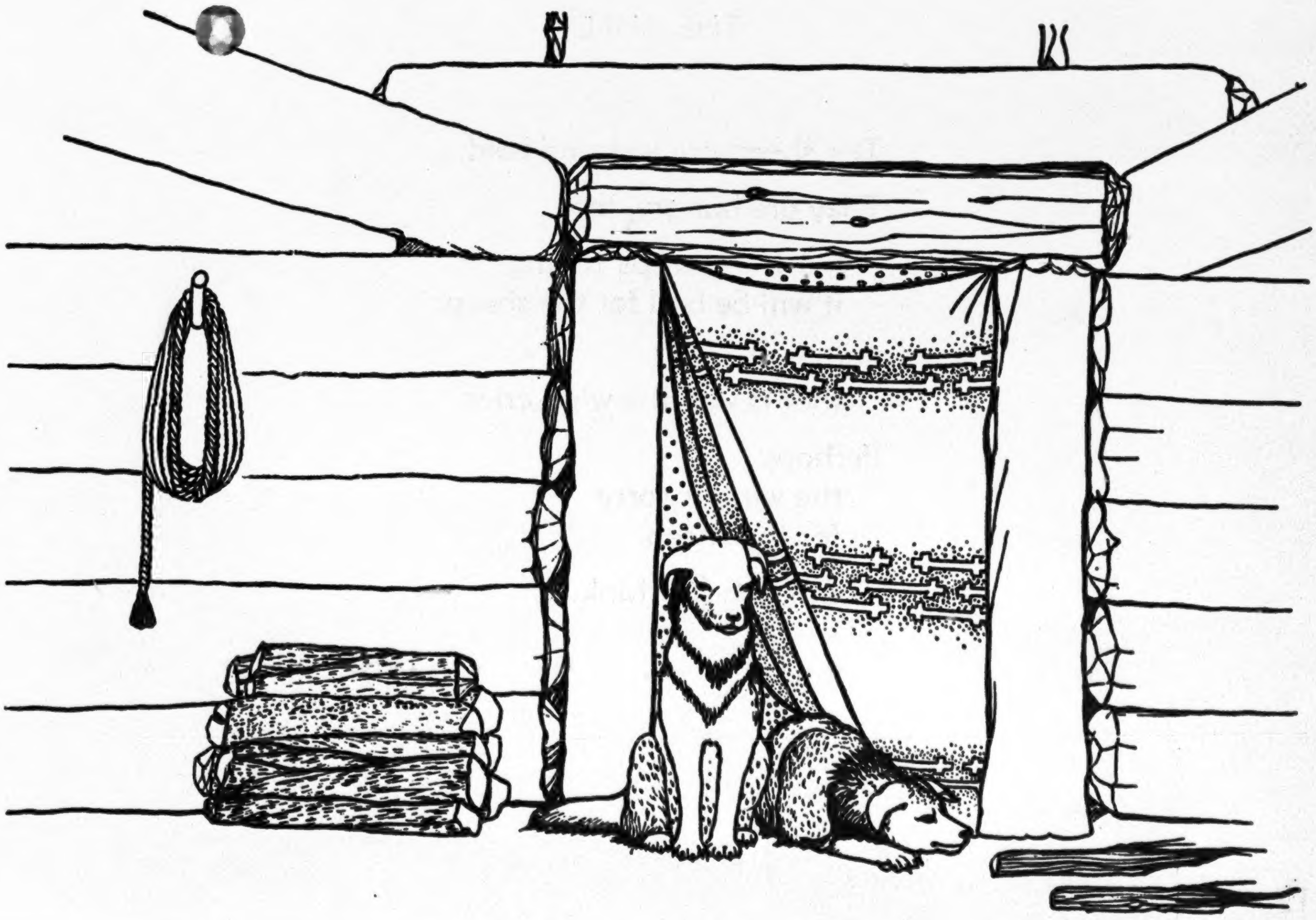
He lies with his head
   on his paws
   and looks at nothing.

The yellow one whimpers.

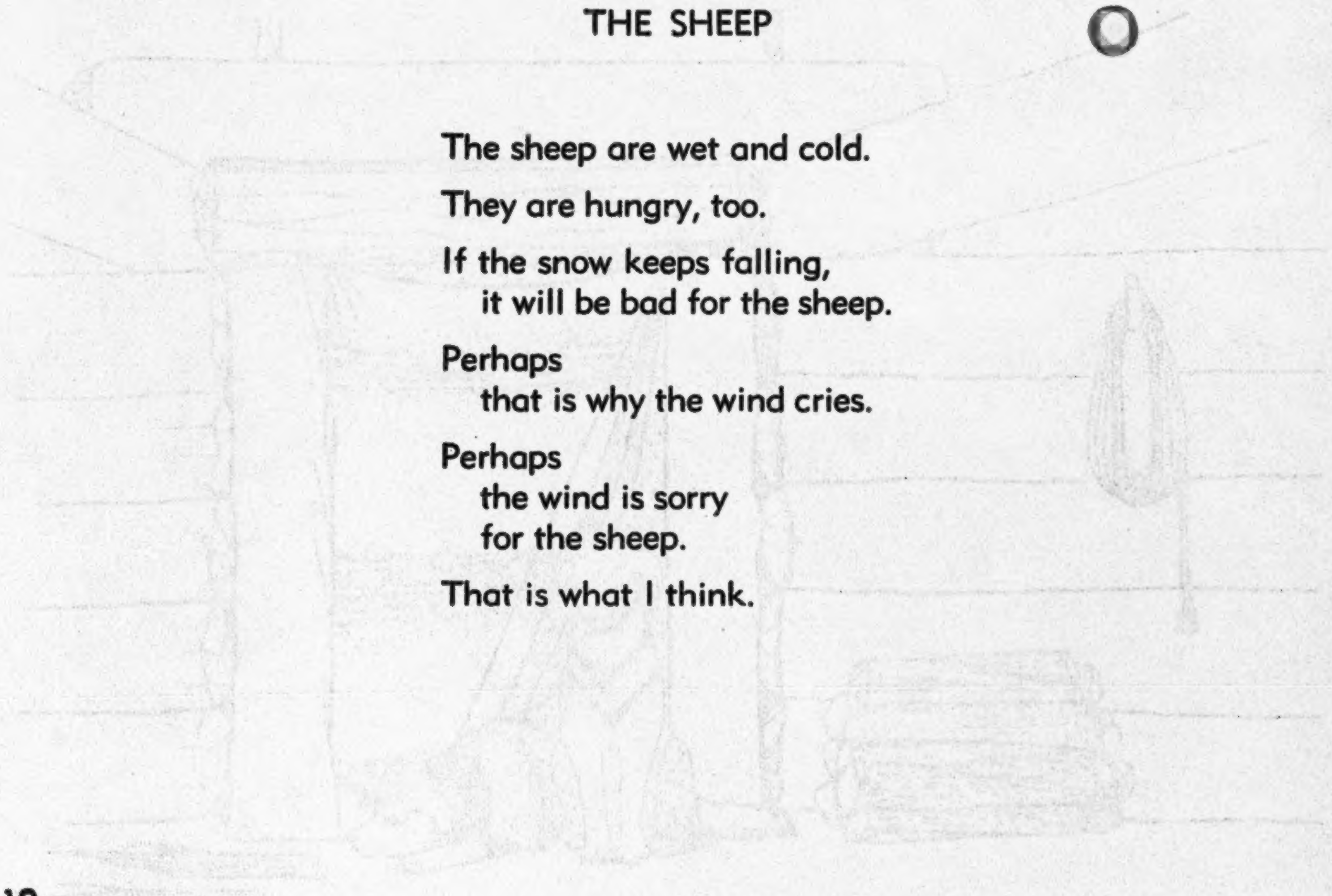
He has worked hard,
   but there is no food.

The gray shadow dog stays outside
   close to the tree trunk
   making no sound
   asking for nothing.

I think
   she knows
   nobody wants her.



# THE SHEEP



The sheep are wet and cold.

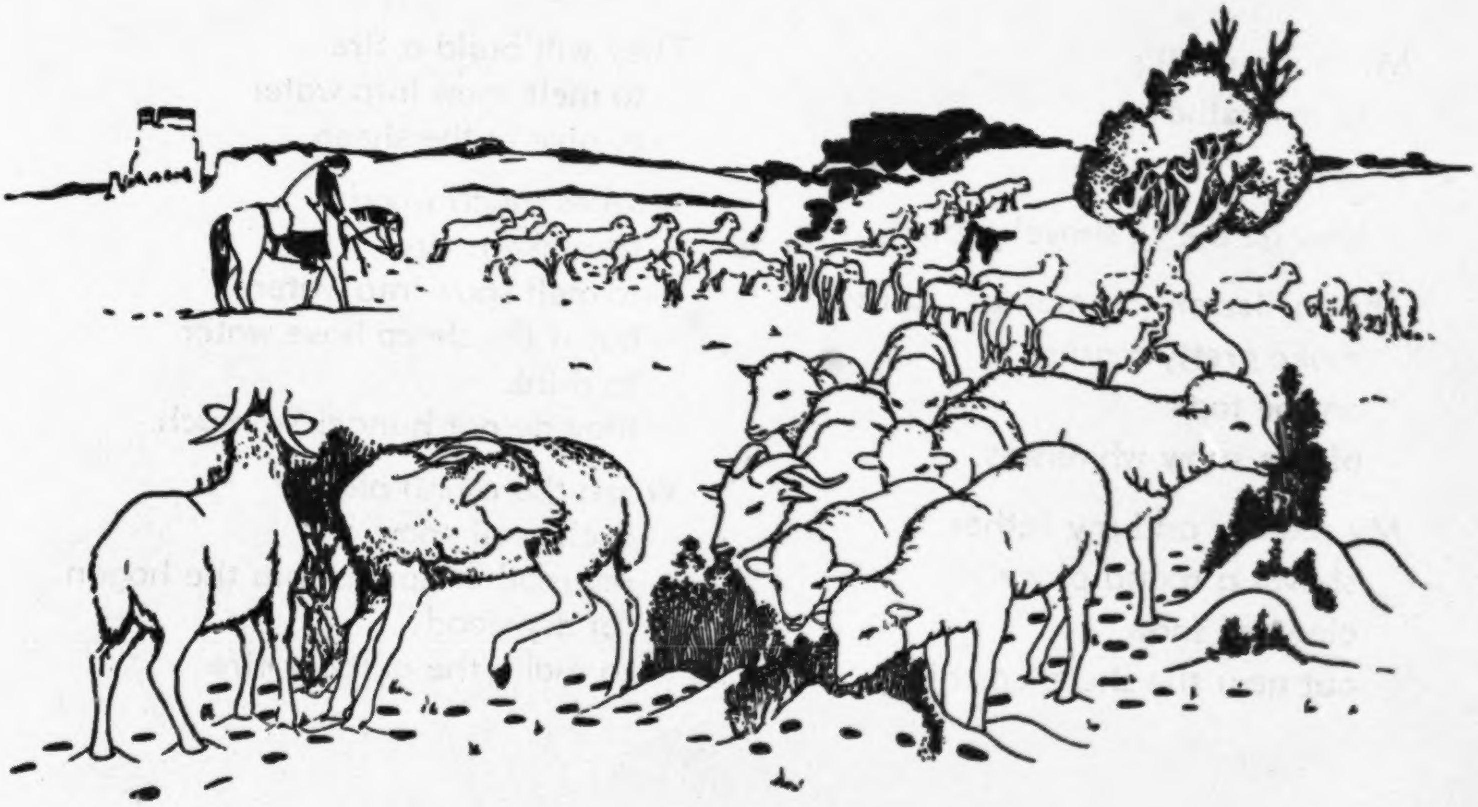
They are hungry, too.

If the snow keeps falling,
  it will be bad for the sheep.

Perhaps
  that is why the wind cries.

Perhaps
  the wind is sorry
  for the sheep.

That is what I think.



## MELTING SNOW WATER

My mother talks
to my father.

Together
they go out to shovel snow.

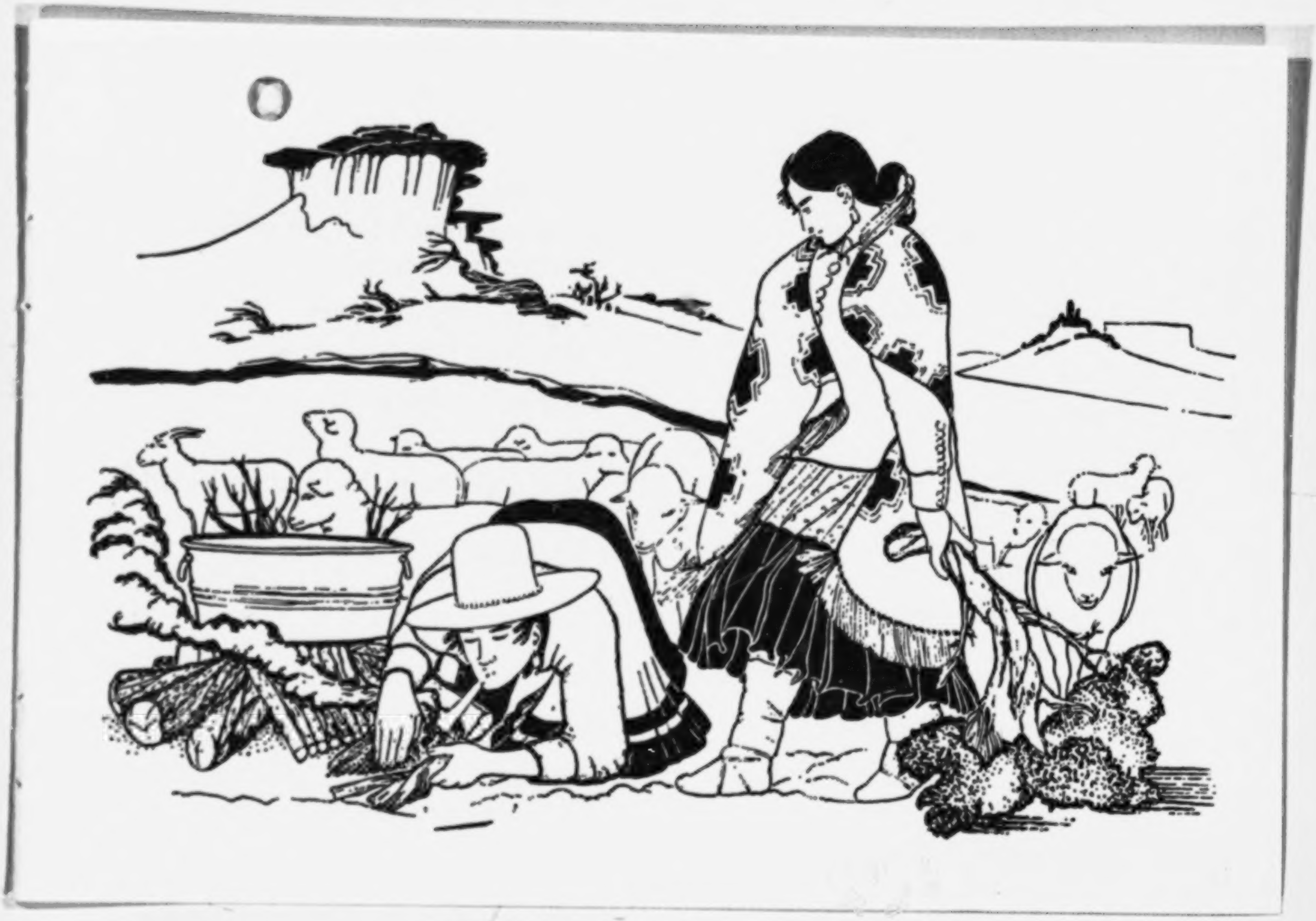
The ruffles on my mother's skirts
make pretty marks
on the top
of the snow whiteness.

My mother and my father
shovel a round place
clean of snow
out near the sheep corral.

They will build a fire
to melt snow into water
to give to the sheep.

It takes much wood
to make a fire
to melt snow into water,
but if the sheep have water
to drink
they do not hunger so much.

When the round place
is clear of snow,
my mother comes into the hogan
for dry wood
to make the outdoor fire.



She picks a stick
from our small pile
beside the fire.

She picks another
and another
until she has a little armful.

My mother picks them up slowly
for our pile is so small.

My father comes into the hogan.
He stamps his feet.

Little hills of dirty snow
melt slowly by them
on the hogan floor.

My father blows on his ha[illegible]s
to warm them.

His breath looks like smoke.

My father shreds juniper bark
to start the outdoor fire.

He takes a lighted stick
from our fire.

He takes it outside.

He puts it
under the bark and the dry wood,
and kneeling down
he blows on it.

Soon
a small flame comes.

It takes a lot of snow
in my mother's washtub
to melt enough water
for the sheep.

When my mother comes again
into the hogan
she is tired.

Her poor face
is dark with cold.

I put my arms
around my mother's knees.

It is the only way I know
to show her
that I am sorry she is cold.

## NIGHT

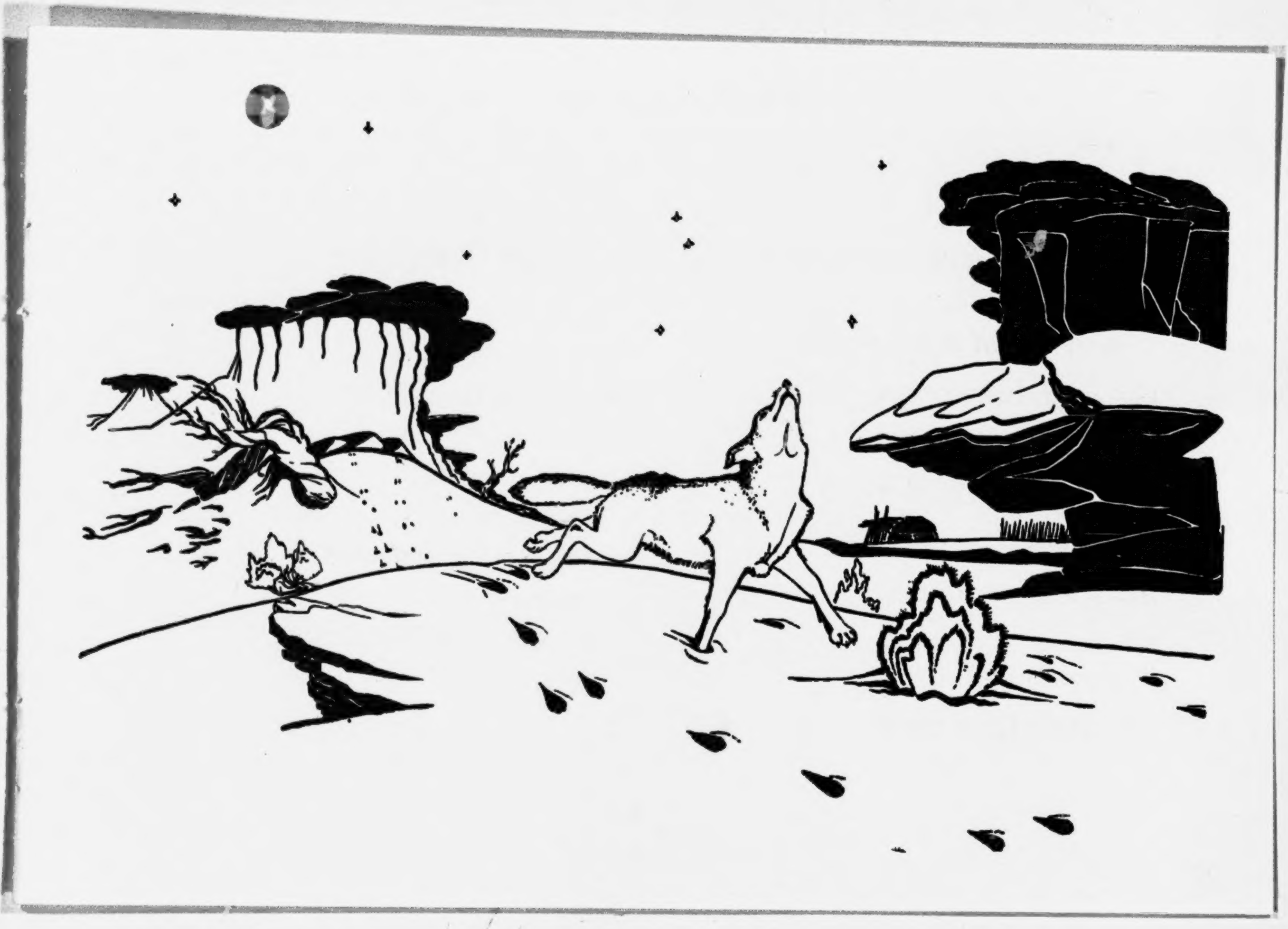
Night is slow in coming,
   but at last it comes
   moving through the snowstorm.

Coyotes howl, far away.

Nearby the wind cries.

The wet wood smokes.

Snow water drips down
   through the smoke hole.



## STORYTELLING

Then
my father tells us stories.

Long stories
made up of many words.

His words have power.

They have strength.

They seem to hold me.

They seem to warm me.

They seem to feed me.

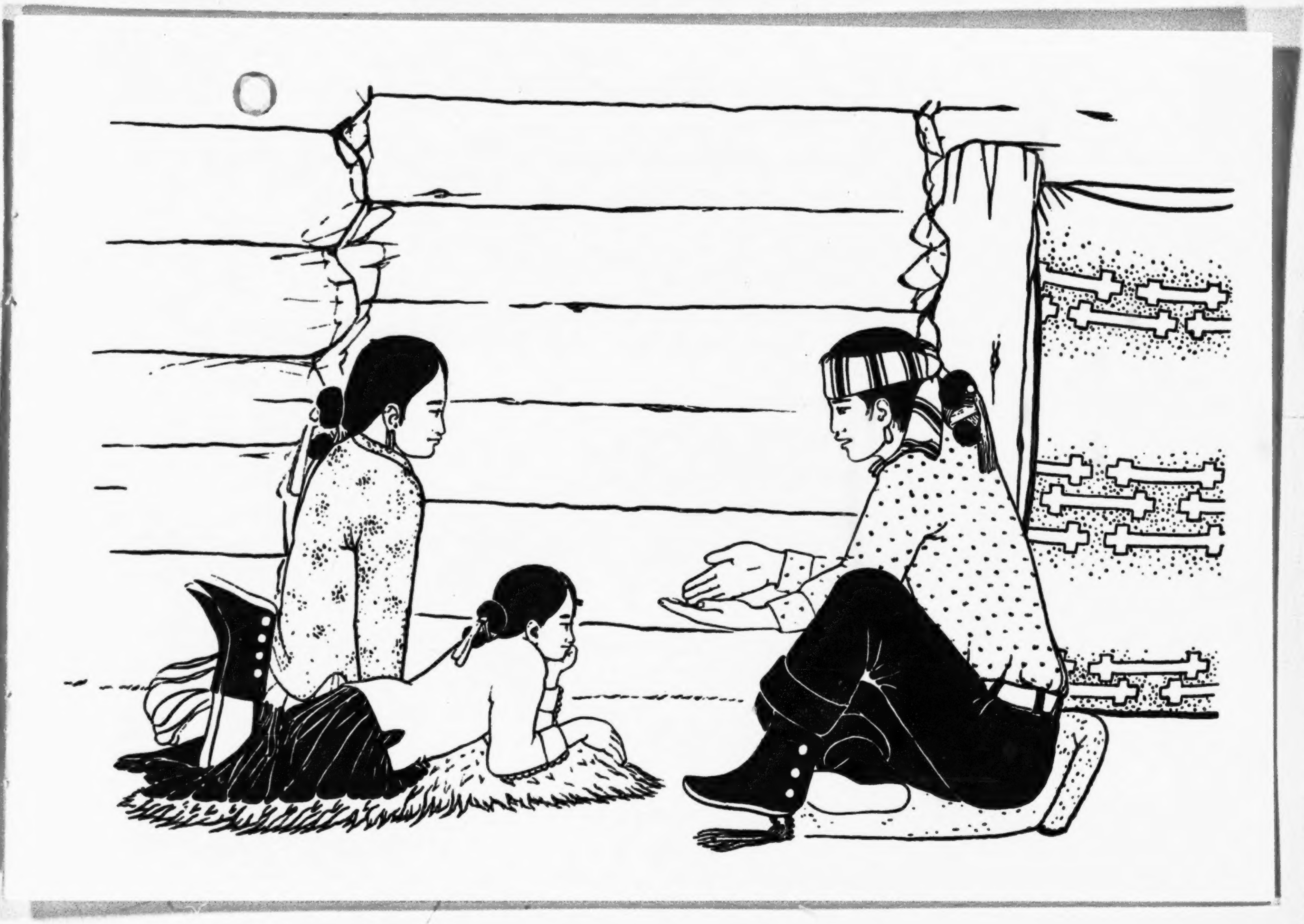
My father's words,
they comfort me.

His words have power.

My father tells
The Star Story.

"When the world was being made,
being made."

My father tells us,
"When the Gods were
placing stars,
the stars,
the stars in patterns
in the sky,
coyote stole the star bag."



"Coyote spilled the stars out
in the sky,
helter skelter in the sky,
when the world was being made."

Softly
my father tells it,
the story of the stars.

Outside,
the wind
and the night
push against
my mother's hogan door.

Outside,
big flakes of snow
fall thickly,
fall softly,
fall steadily.

Inside,
snow water drips
down the smoke hole
and the words of
my father's voice
drop softly
into the quiet
of my mother's hogan.

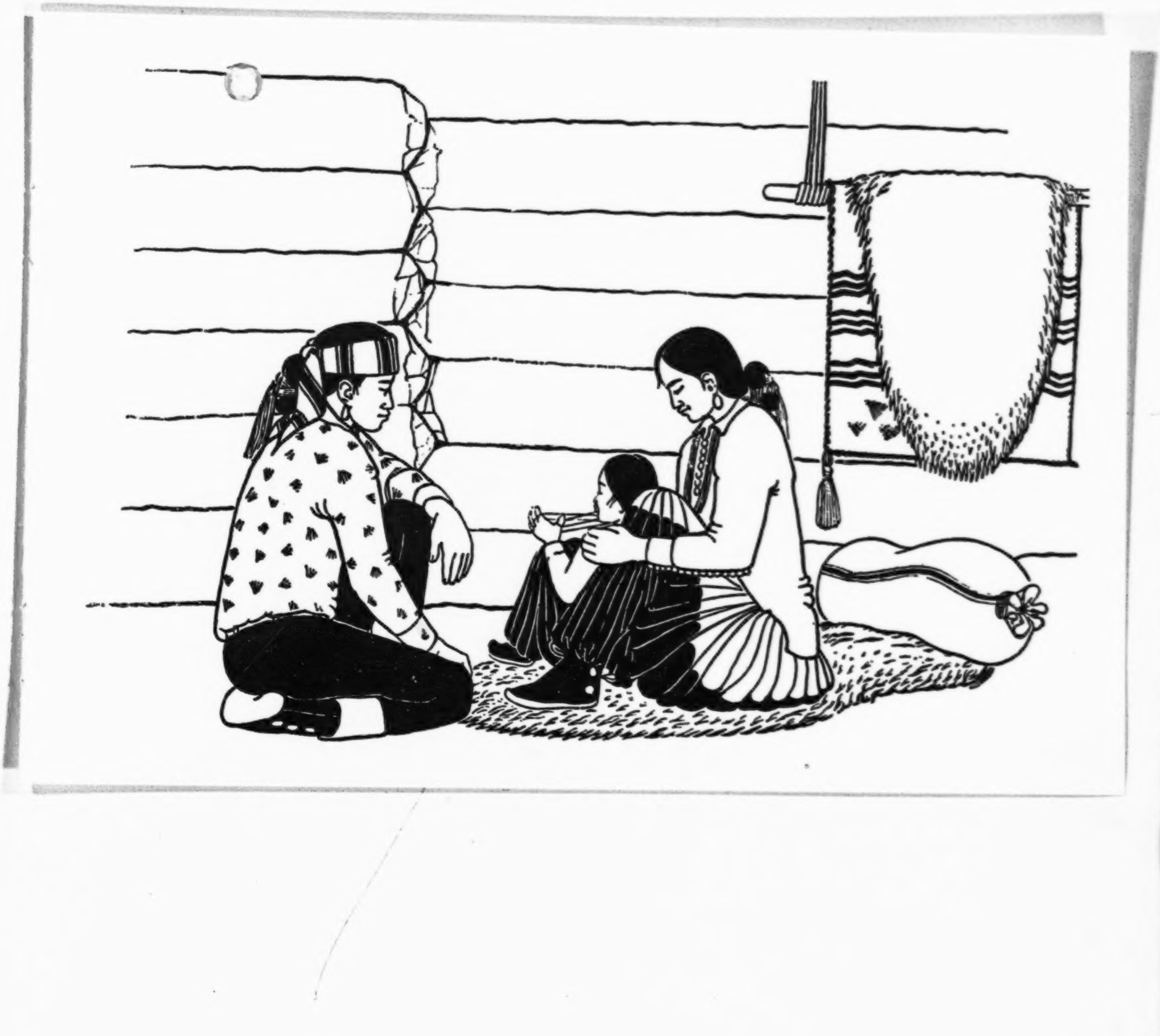
## "IT–IS–TWISTED"

The Star Story
made my mother think
of the string game,
"It-Is-Twisted."

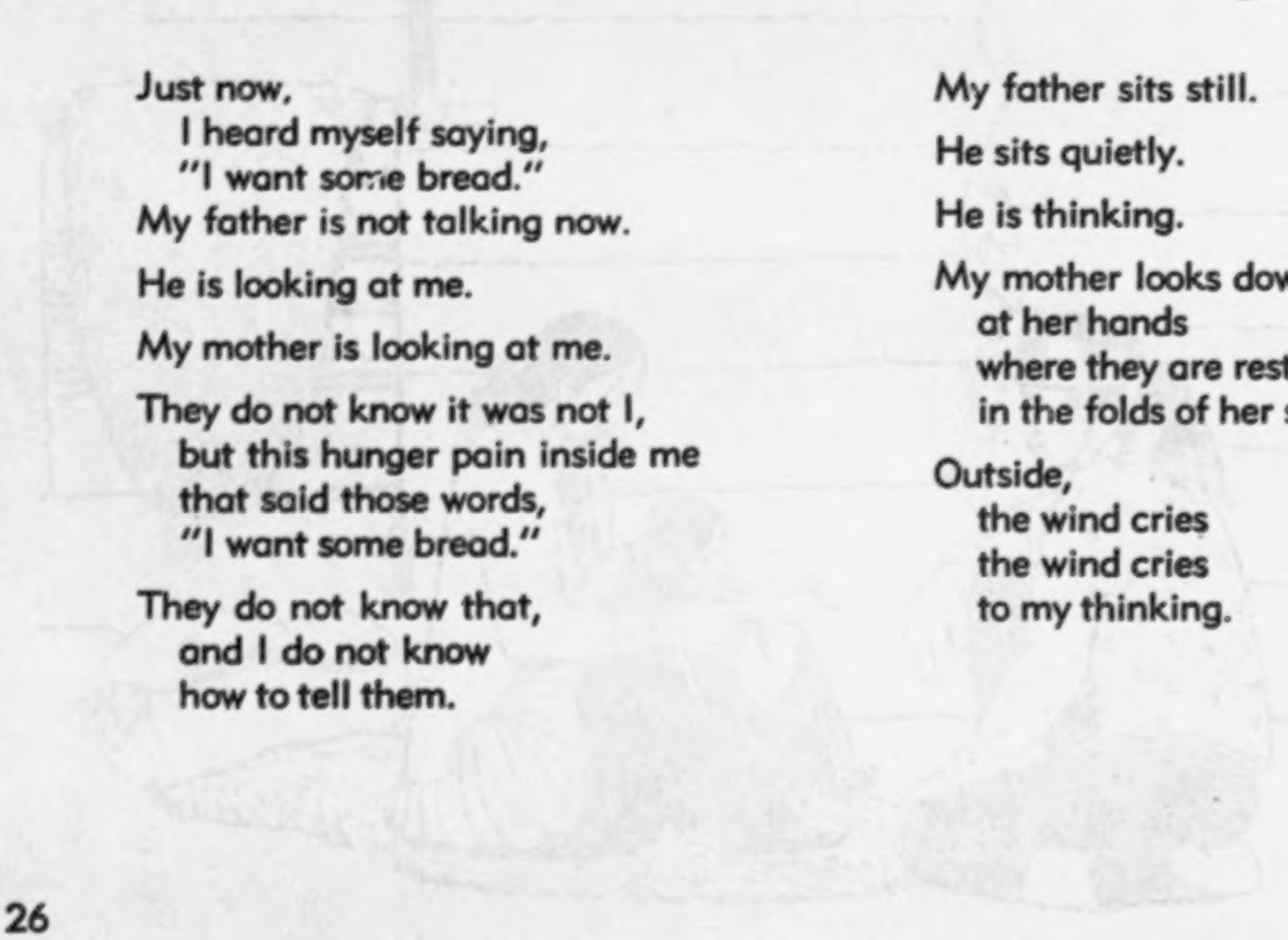
She said that the Spider People
gave it to us
to use in winter evenings.

My mother showed us
how to make the game.

She made
Twin-Stars and Many-Stars,
Big-Star and Horned-Star
with pieces of string.



# PAWN



Just now,
I heard myself saying,
"I want some bread."
My father is not talking now.

He is looking at me.

My mother is looking at me.

They do not know it was not I,
but this hunger pain inside me
that said those words,
"I want some bread."

They do not know that,
and I do not know
how to tell them.

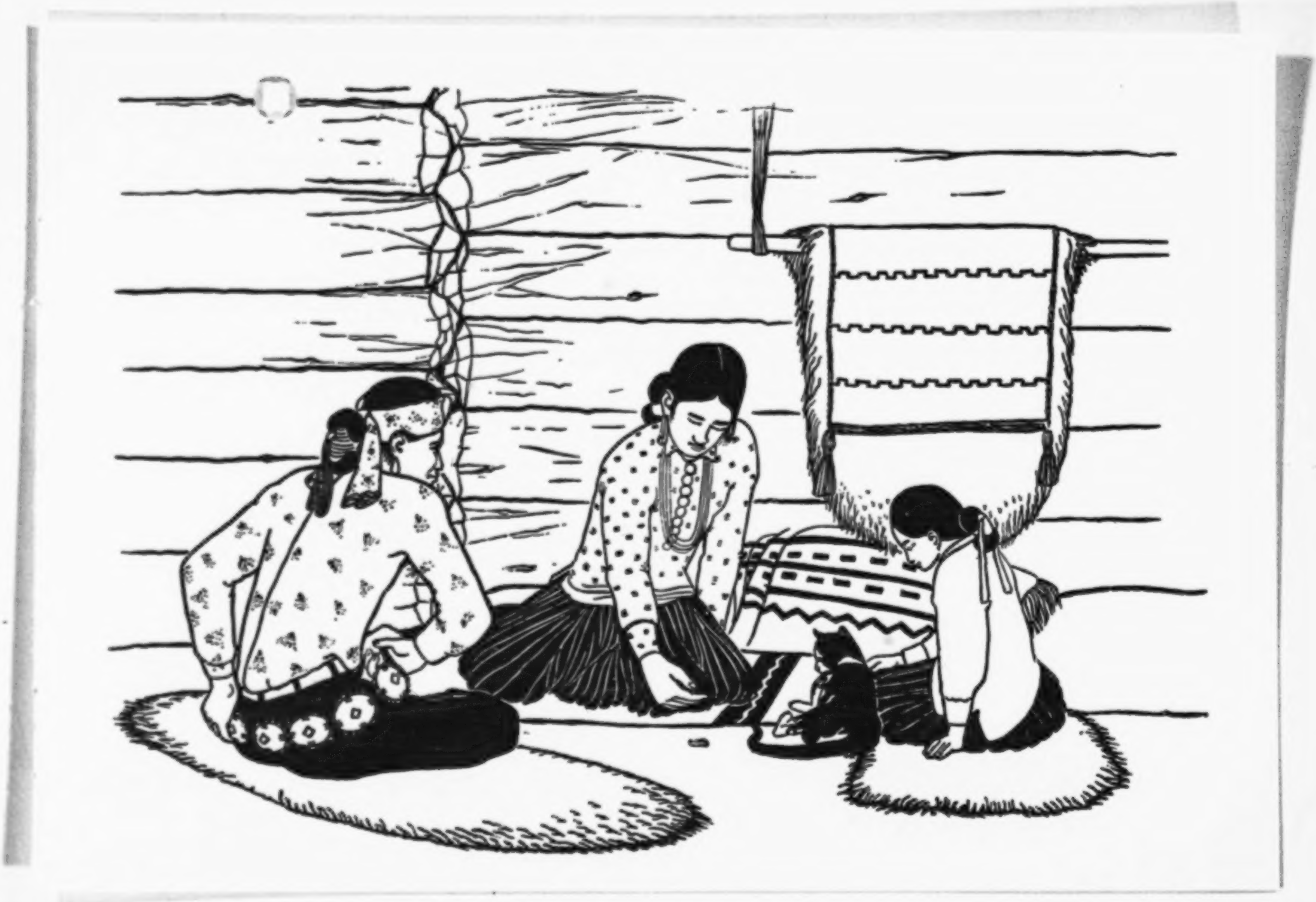
My father sits still.

He sits quietly.

He is thinking.

My mother looks down
at her hands
where they are resting
in the folds of her skirt.

Outside,
the wind cries
the wind cries
to my thinking.



Slowly
my father takes his concho belt
from about his waist.

Slowly
his fingers touch the belt,
counting,
counting,
counting the conchos.

Slowly
my mother takes her coral string
from about her neck.

She looks at it.

She looks at it.

Slowly
she puts it back again
around her neck.

Then
my mother
takes from her finger
her largest turquoise ring.

My father puts his concho belt
upon the floor.

My mother puts her turquoise ring
upon the floor.

The concho belt
and the turquoise ring
make a splash of color
in the gray-lighted hogan.

He will pawn them
because our food
is getting low.

The concho belt
and the turquoise ring
are for pawn.

They are for pawn.

Pawn to the trader
for food.

Pawn to the trader
that we may eat.

Our hard goods,
our possessions
we give them
for salt
and for flour.

They are for pawn.

Who knows
when we can buy them back.

The snow water drops
from the smoke hole
like tears.

The wind cries.

Quickly
my father sings
a funny song
to make laughter come
to my mother
and me.

## MORNING

The wind lies still.

It has not gone away
I know,
for I can feel it
lying there outside
hiding in the snow.

The wind lies still
behind the snowdrifts,
but sometimes
it starts up
with a low cry,
then falls again
to hide.

Cold bends over the land.

The white feathers of snow
fall slower and slower.

My mother and my father
get up early.

My mother will kill a sheep
so my father can eat
something
before he starts
for the trading post.

My father waits
for my mother
to butcher the sheep
and to cook a piece
for his breakfast.

Then my father finds his horse.

He ties an empty flour sack
behind his saddle.

He wraps his blanket about him
and leaning his body
against the storm
he rides to the trading post.

My father rides
into the snow-filled world.

His blanket and his horse
are the only colors
moving
through the white.

Snow comes into my heart
filling it with cold
when I see
my father ride away.

## SHOVELING SNOW

For a little while
I sit in the hogan
thinking of my father
riding along the snowy trail
to the trading post.

Snow stops falling.

Cold blows its blue breath
across the white.

I help my mother shovel snow.
We make a path to the sheep corral
and to my grandmother's hogan.

The snow, so soft to feel,
is hard to shovel.

The cold slaps at my face.

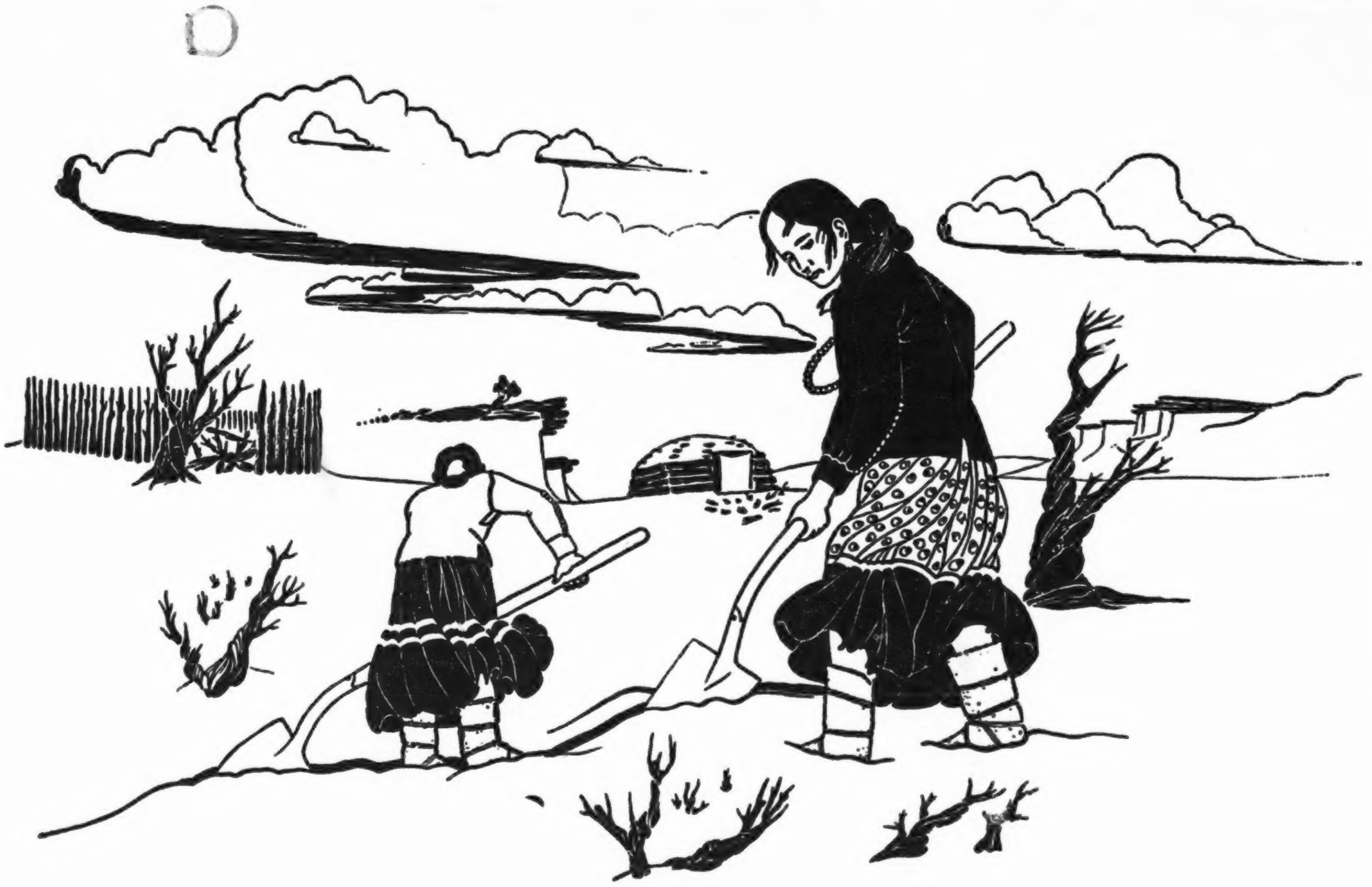
It traps my hands and my feet
in icy feeling.

My mother takes me
into the hogan.

She rubs my face and hands
and my feet with snow.

Soon
little hot pains
come to play
with my cold fingers
and my cold toes.

Soon
the icy feeling goes away.



## CAT'S-CRADLES

The day moves slowly.

My father does not come back
along the trail.

It is far to the trading post.

The snow is deep.

I think of my father
and his concho belt.

I look at my mother's finger.

One finger looks bare
without its turquoise ring.

I pull my sleeve down
over by bracelet.

Perhaps
I should have given it
to my father.

My grandmother comes to see us.

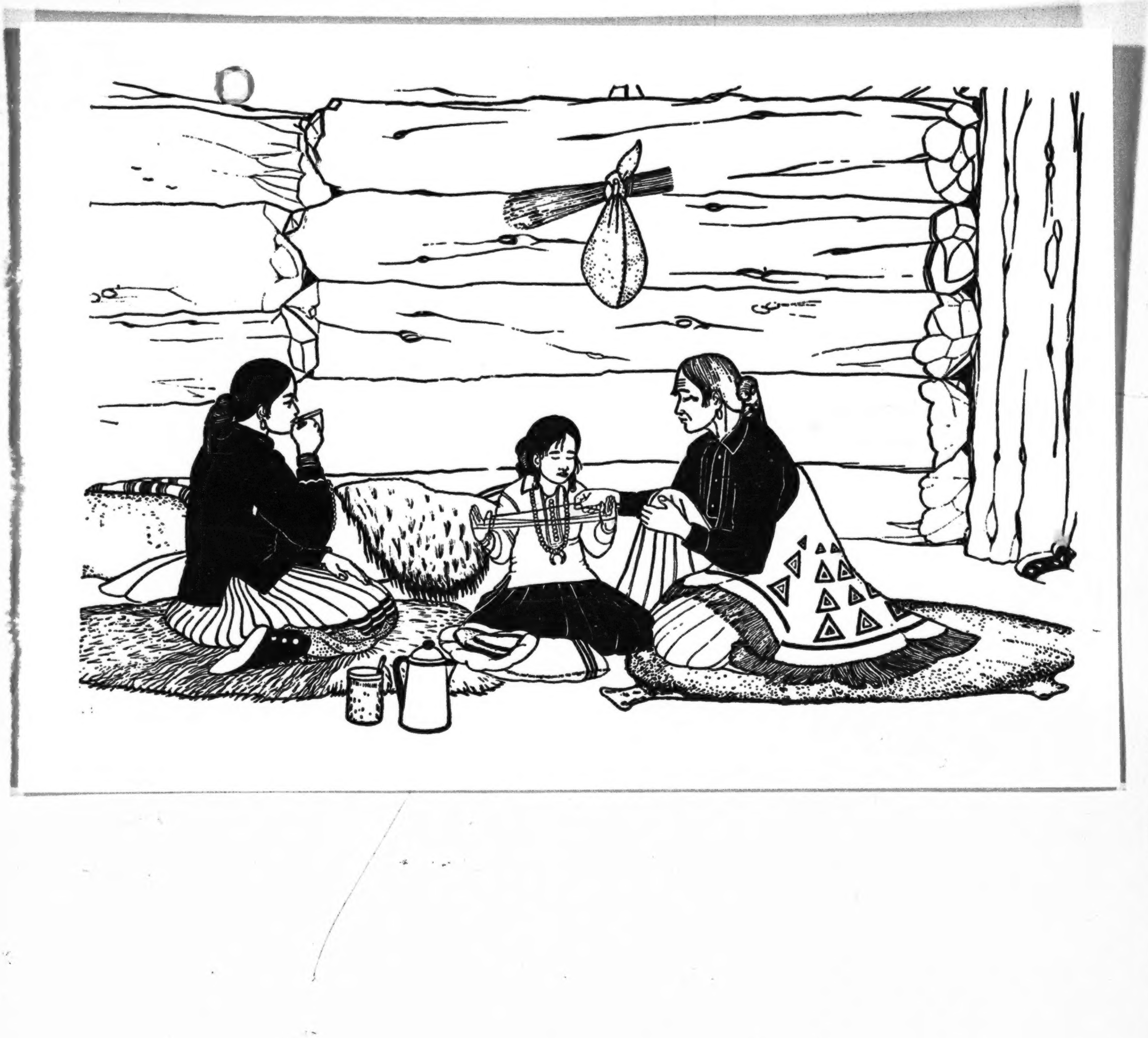
She brings a piece of bread
for me
and for my mother
to eat with our meat.

She brings a piece of string.

She shows me how
to make Cat's-Cradles.

She shows me how
to make "It-Is-Twisted."

We make Bird's-Nest and Butterflies
and Coyotes-Running-Apart
with the piece of string.



## FATHER COMES BACK

We hear my father singing
as he rides along
the snowy trail.

My grandmother goes to her hogan
and my mother and I,
we stand together,
laughing.

We stand together
outside our door,
happy
because
my father comes back again.

Behind my father's saddle
is tied
the flour sack filled with food.

It is not empty now,
but a sack
of bumps and bumps,
and heavy looking.

In front of him
my father carries
a dry wood box
that the trader gave him.

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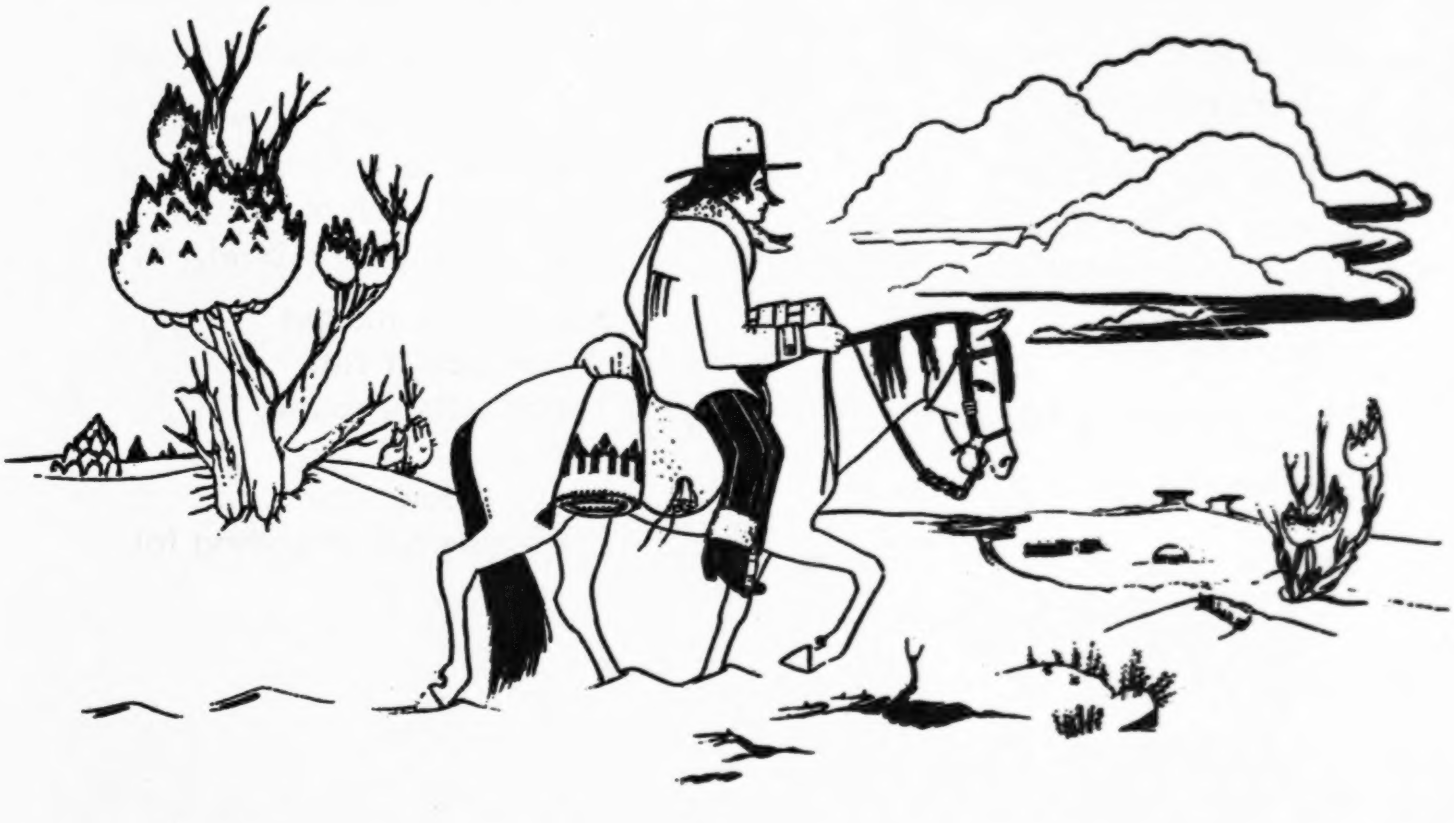


My mother takes the sack of food.

I take the dry wood box.

My father takes the saddle
from his horse.

We go into the hogan
with our bundles in our arms.

My mother breaks the box
with her foot.

She breaks the pieces across her knee.

She feeds them to the fire.

The dry wood box
makes the fire flame dance
in the hogan fire.

My mother puts meat to cook.

She mixes flour and water,
a little ball of lard,
a little pinch of salt,
in our round tin bowl.

She takes some out
and pats it flat,
and pats it round,
and pats it thin,
and throws it in
a kettle full of boiling fat.

This hunger pain inside me
is bigger now than I am.

It is the smell of cooking food
that makes it grow, I think.

Soon the fried bread
in the hot fat
swells big and brown.

Soon the meat
in the stew pot
makes bubbling noises.

Coffee boils
smelling strong and good.

The hunger pain
is now so big
I cannot understand
Why I do not see it.

## SUPPER

Now we are eating
  the good food.

We eat slowly.

We eat a long time.

The hunger pain is gone.

It went somewhere,
  but I do not know when,
  it left so quickly.

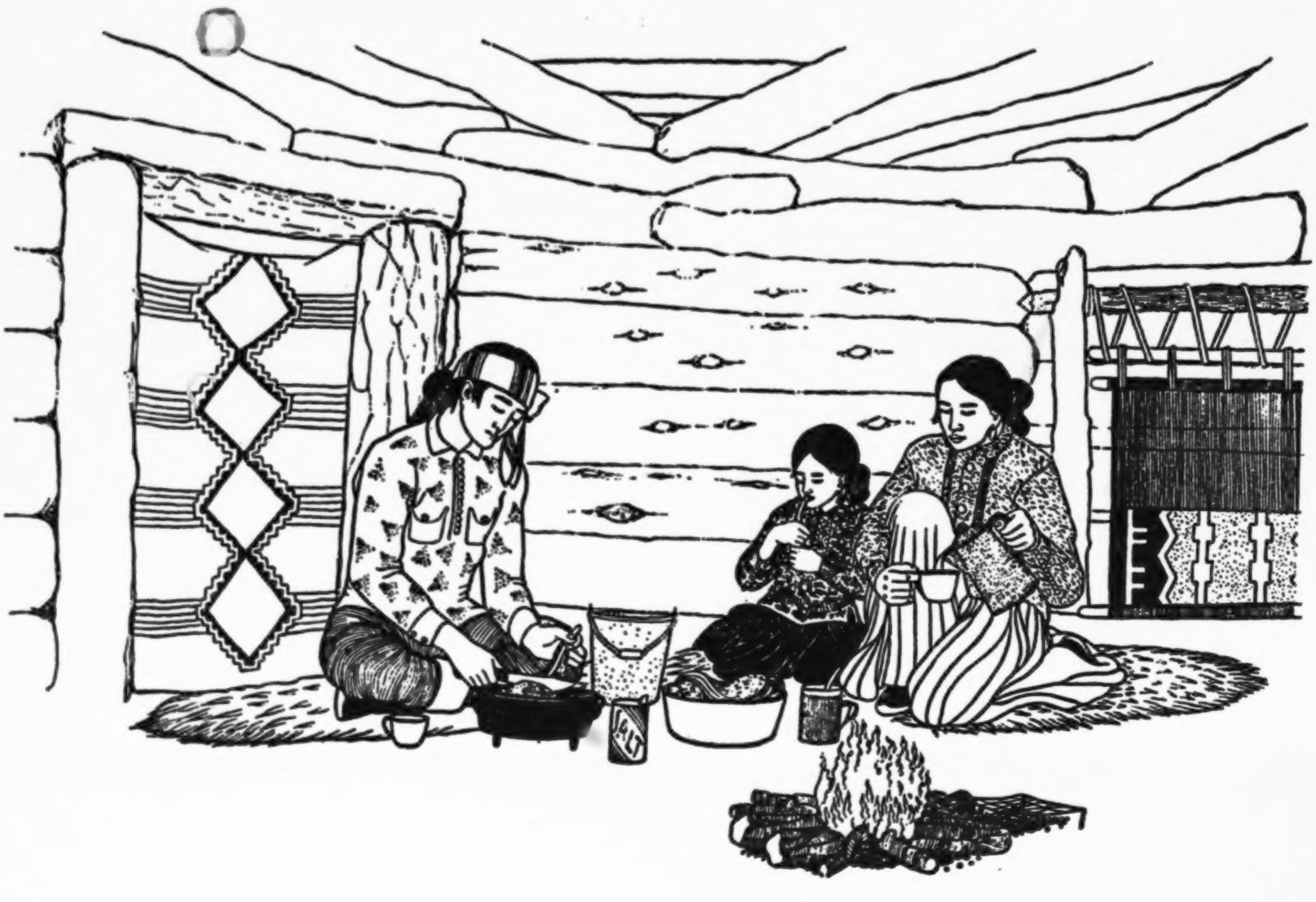
My father tells us
  that the wife of Tall-Man's brother
  suffers from something.

She is sick.

My father tells us
  that tomorrow
  there will be a Sing
  for this woman
  who has sickness.

We will go,
  he says,
  if the sun shines tomorrow.

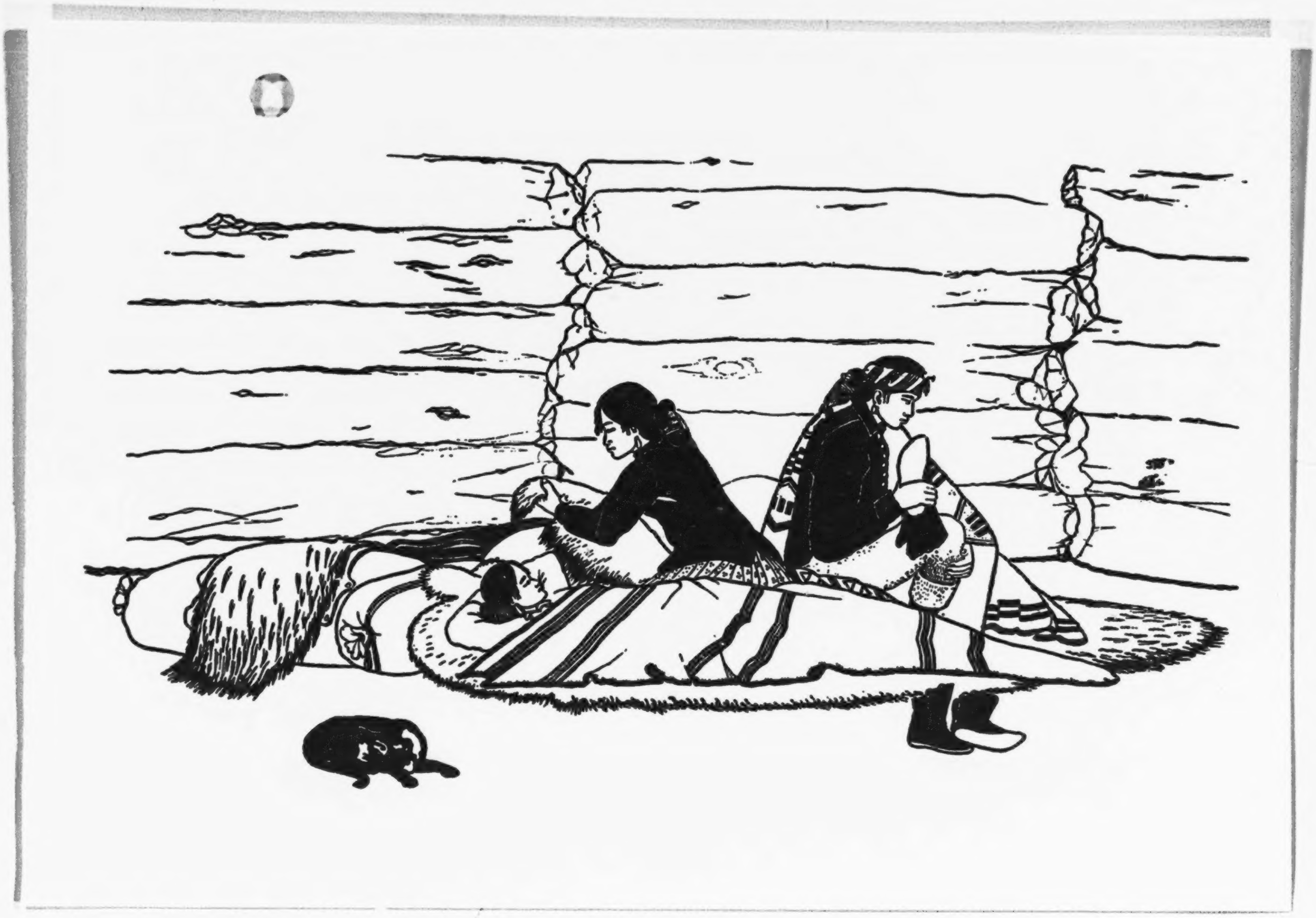
We will go to the hogan
  of the wife of Tall-Man's brother.


SALT

## SLEEP

Now that I am warm
and have no pain
and feel well fed
with my mother's good cooking,
I feel sleepy
and glad.

Lying on my blanket bed
on the floor of the hogan,
I say to myself
over and over,
"If the sun shines tomorrow
we will go to the Sing."



## MORNING SUN

Last night went quickly
with sleeping.

It is tomorrow
now.

I open my eyes
to a beautiful world
of sun
and snow.

Everywhere I look
the snow shines
as if someone
had sprinkled it
with broken bits of stars.

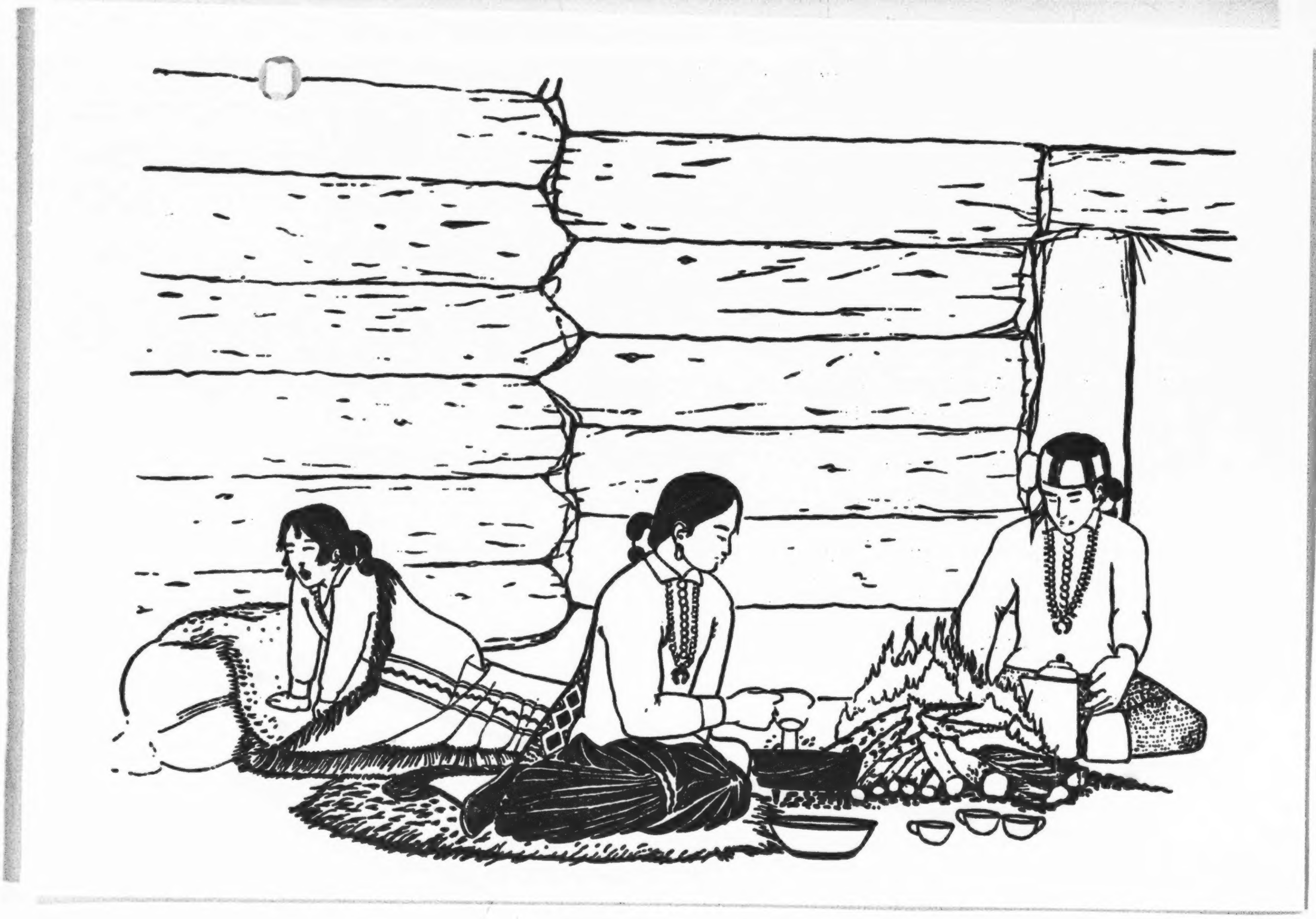
My father says,
"Snow is good for the land.
When the sun melts it,
the thirsty sand
drinks in the snow water."

Grass patches show again.

They look fresh and clean.

The goats hurry about
eating all they can.

Even the sheep move
more quickly,
eating.



## GOING TO THE SING

My father goes for dry wood.

He has to go to the foothills
to get it.

My mother cooks bread and meat.

I sit by the door in the sunshine
and think about the Sing.

My grandmother comes
to my mother's hogan.

She will look after the sheep
while we are gone to the Sing.

The sun shines.

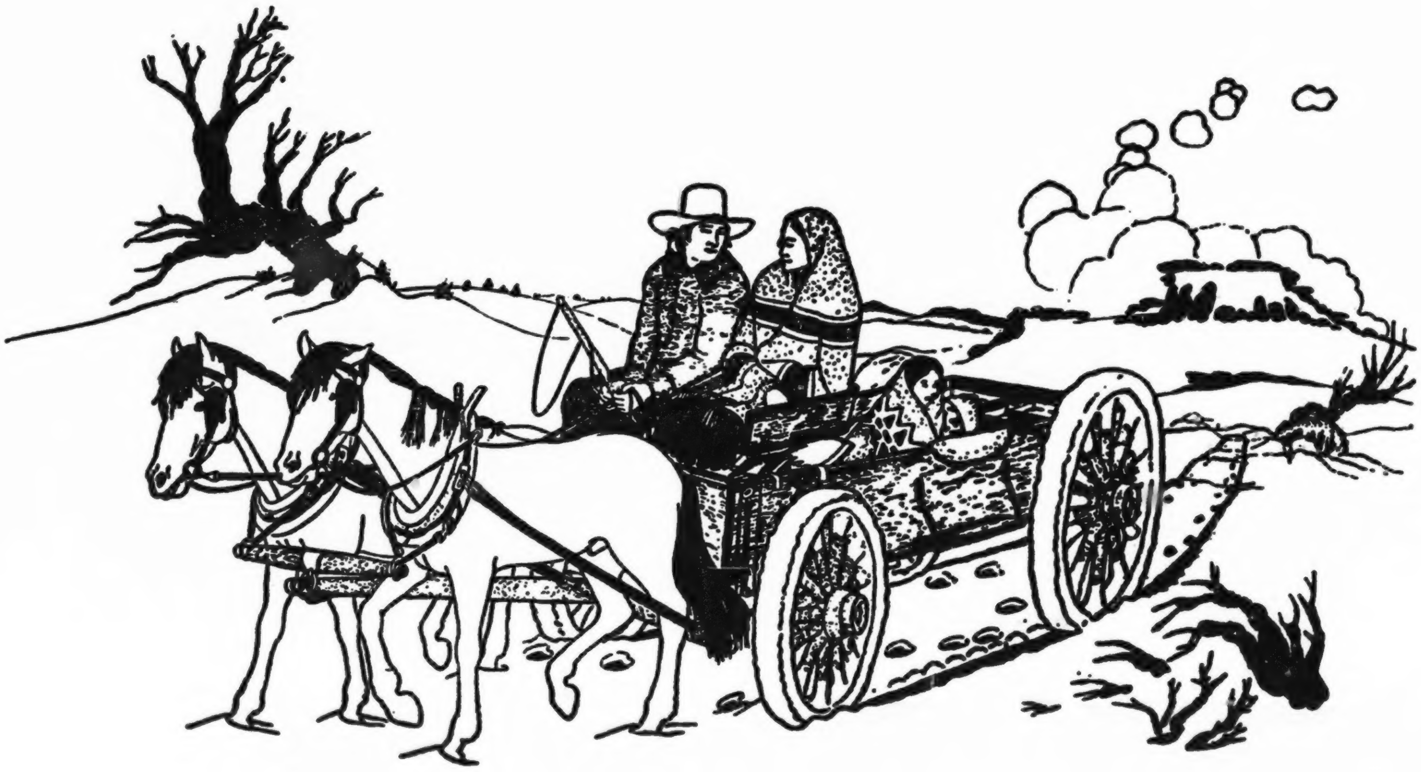
The sun shines.

Soon we will go
to the Sing,
the Sing.

After awhile
my father comes back with
the wagon.

He piles the wood near the hogan.

He says he is ready
to go to the Sing
and we are ready, too.



It is not far.

Not long after
the sun has finished with the day
we will get there.

We will get to the hogan
of the wife of Tall-Man's brother.

We will be at the Sing,
the Sing,
the Sing.

The ruts in the road
are deep
and frozen.

The wheels of the wagon
have a song of their own.

I sit in the back of the wagon
in a nest made of blankets.

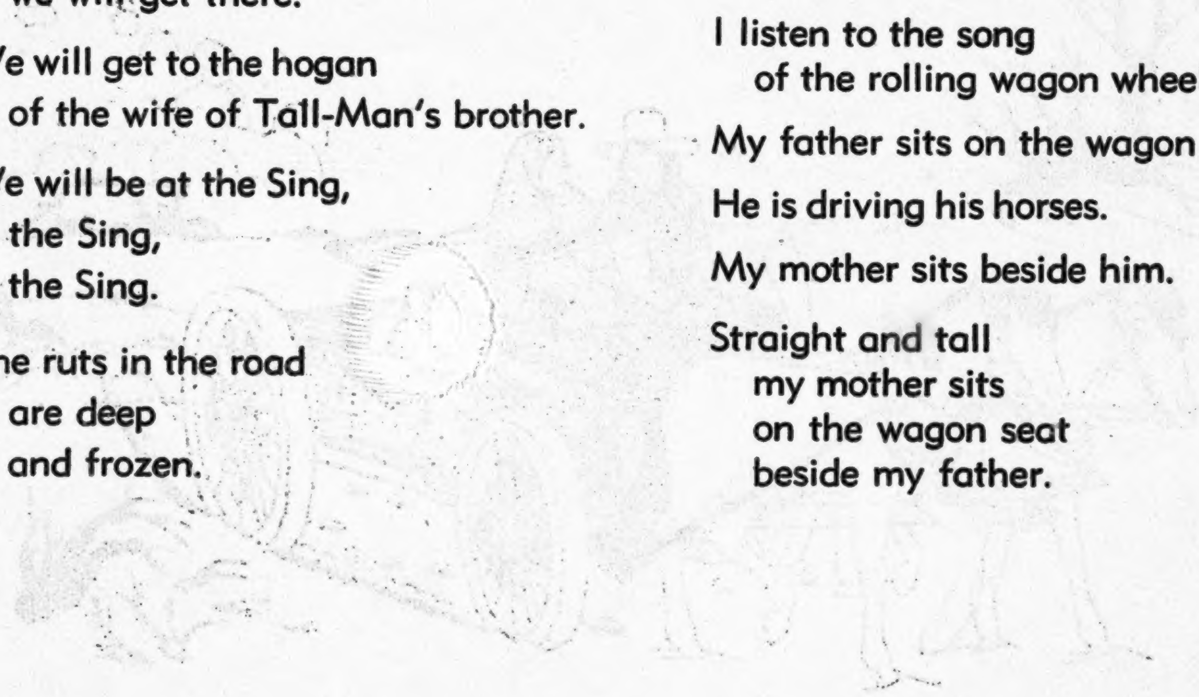
I listen to the song
of the rolling wagon wheels.

My father sits on the wagon seat.

He is driving his horses.

My mother sits beside him.

Straight and tall
my mother sits
on the wagon seat
beside my father.



My father sings
as he drives along.

He is happy.

He sings, "Now is winter.

Thunder sleeps.

Falls the snow.

Thunder sleeps.

Grass is gone.

Thunder sleeps.

Birds are gone.

Thunder sleeps.

Warmth is gone from the sands,
from the red rocks,
from the canyons.

Thunder sleeps.

It sleeps."

In my father's wagon
we go.

Behind my father's horses
we go.

On the Trail of the Holy Songs
we go
to hear the voices of the Gods.

# THE SING

It will be a long time
before the night sky bends down
and the stars hang low
and the supper fires
of the camping people
dot the night.

Our wagon
comes within the circles
of supper fires,
comes within the circle
of firelight,
and I see all the People
who have come to the Sing.

There are many People here.

There are many horses here.

There are many wagons here.

There is one truck.

It makes me happy to see
all of the People
walking around
and standing and sitting.

It makes me happy to see
all the colors that there are
in the skirts of the women
in the shirts of the men
and in the blankets
that all the People wear.

I can [illegible]e
the horses,
all the horses.

I can see a race horse
that belongs to a man
my uncle knows.

After the Sing is over,
the men will race their horses.

My father will bet
which horse will win.

And then
perhaps
he will win
a better concho belt
than the one
he has in pawn
to the trader.

There is a new hogan
built just for the Sing.

There are some shelters
built just for the Sing,
and at one side
is the Cook Shade
where all kinds of foods
are cooking.

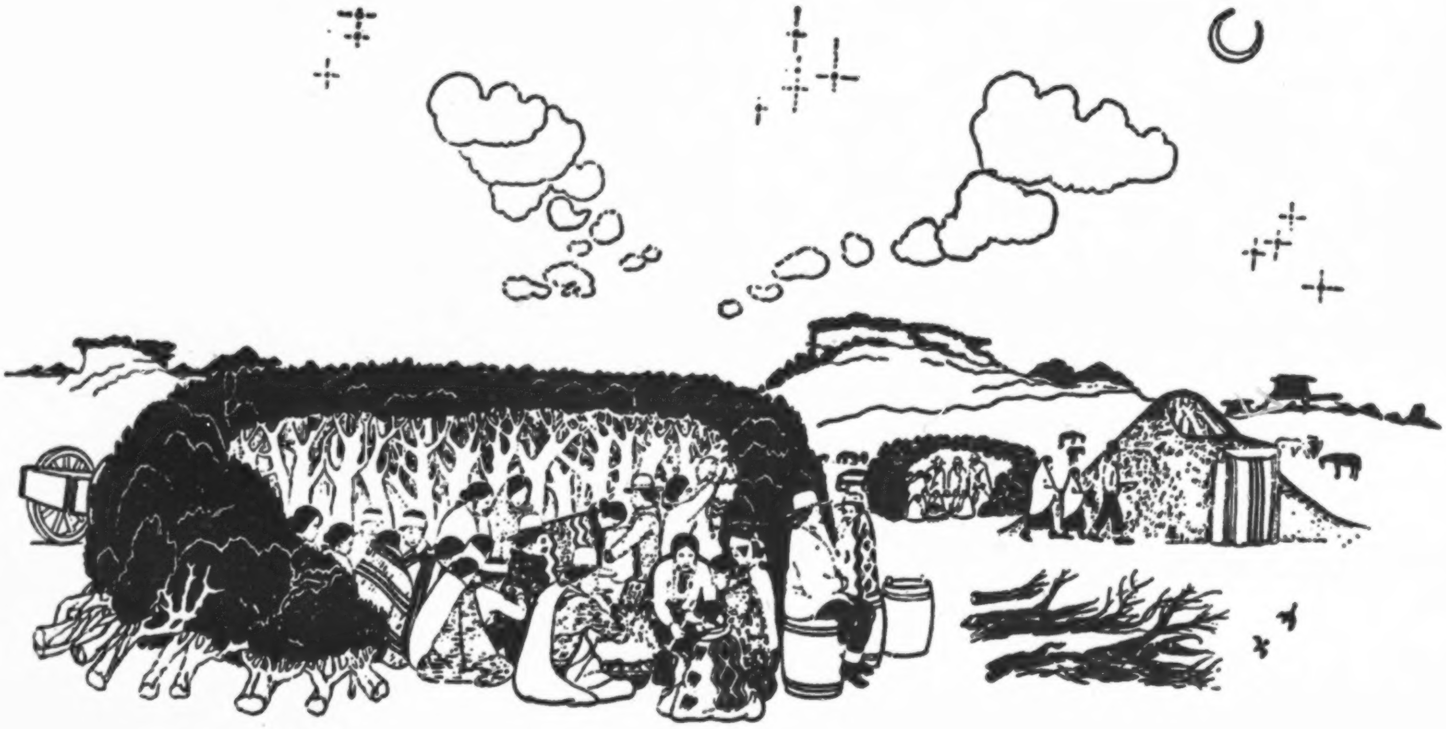
The smell of food
makes me happy.

I think
it is good
to be happy
when food is near.

As it gets darker
more fires are lighted
and within the circle
a big one burns.

Smoke get in my eyes
and I can taste it
in my mouth.

In the folds of my mother's blanket,
in the warmth of my
mother's blanket,
in the quiet of my
mother's blanket,
close to her heart
I sleep
and awaken
to hear the Gods,
the Singers of Songs.



Now is the time
  for the singing.

Now is the time
  for the songs.

We go,
  we go,
  on the Holy Trail of Song.

We go,
  we go,
  to hear the voices of the Gods.

They say,
  on the path of the rainbow,
  they say,
  on the bridge of the lightning,
  they say
  on the trail of pollen
  went the Elder Brother,
  Reared-in-the-Mountains,
  Young Man,
  Chief.

We go to hear them say it.

Look! Look!
  they say,
  they say,
  the Gods are walking.

The Gods are walking.
Follow the trail of song.
Hu-Hu-Hu-Hu.

Look! Look!
they say,
they say,
the Gods are dancing.

The Gods are dancing.

Follow the trail of song.

Hu-Hu-Hu-Hu.

Look! Look!
they say,
they say,
the Gods are singing.

The Gods are singing.

Follow the trail of song.

Hu-Hu-Hu-Hu.

It is finished.

The Sing is finished.

Dawn light is here.

Gray light is here.

Morning is here.

Day is here.

The sun comes again
to warm the world.

The Sing is finished.

It is finished.

Finished.

# THE BETTING

The men go for horses
that have walked away
to find grass to eat.

The women put blankets
and food
in the wagons.

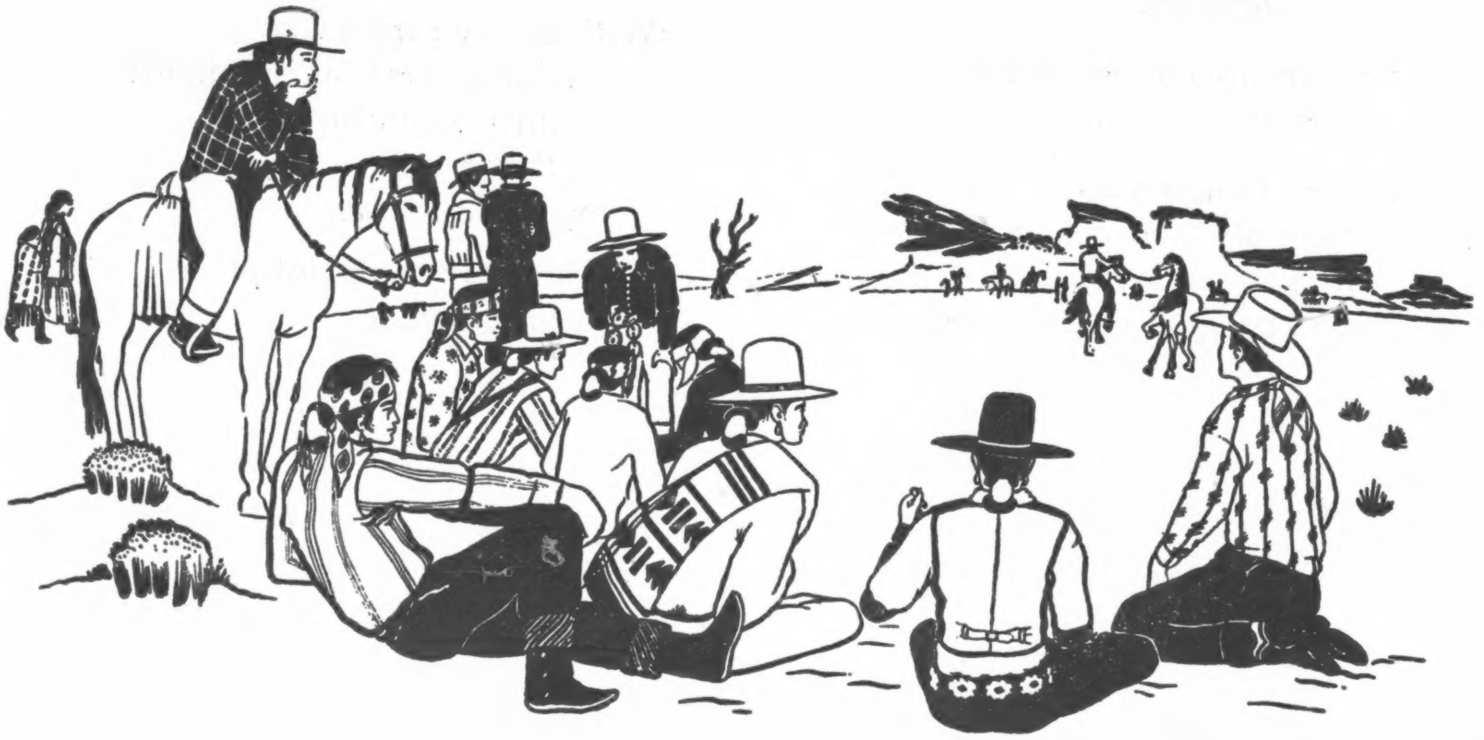
My uncle tells my father
to wait awhile
because
my uncle says
he knows a man
who has a horse
that can win a race.

All the men stand around.

They talk together
about this horse.

My father get the things
out of the wagon
that my mother has put in it.

He is going to bet them
on this horse
that my uncle says
can win a race.



The trader comes.

He does not like the horse
my uncle knows.

He puts up a hundred dollars
against the horse.

All the Indian men
take off their concho belts
and rings and turquoise
and bowguards and blankets.

They throw them on th[illegible]round
to make a pile of things
as much as a hundred dollars.

With another man
my father bets his bowguard
against a concho belt
on that horse
my uncle knows.

The men choose a flat place
to run the race.

They say,
"We will run
to that place
and back."

They mount their horses.

They line them up.

One man stands by
the pool of things
that are being bet
against the hundred dollars.

## THE RACE

The starter takes his hat off.
He lifts it up.
He lifts it up.
He holds it there.
He drops it.
They are off.
They are off.
They are running together.
No horse is in front.
No horse is behind.
They are together.
Together.
Running, running.

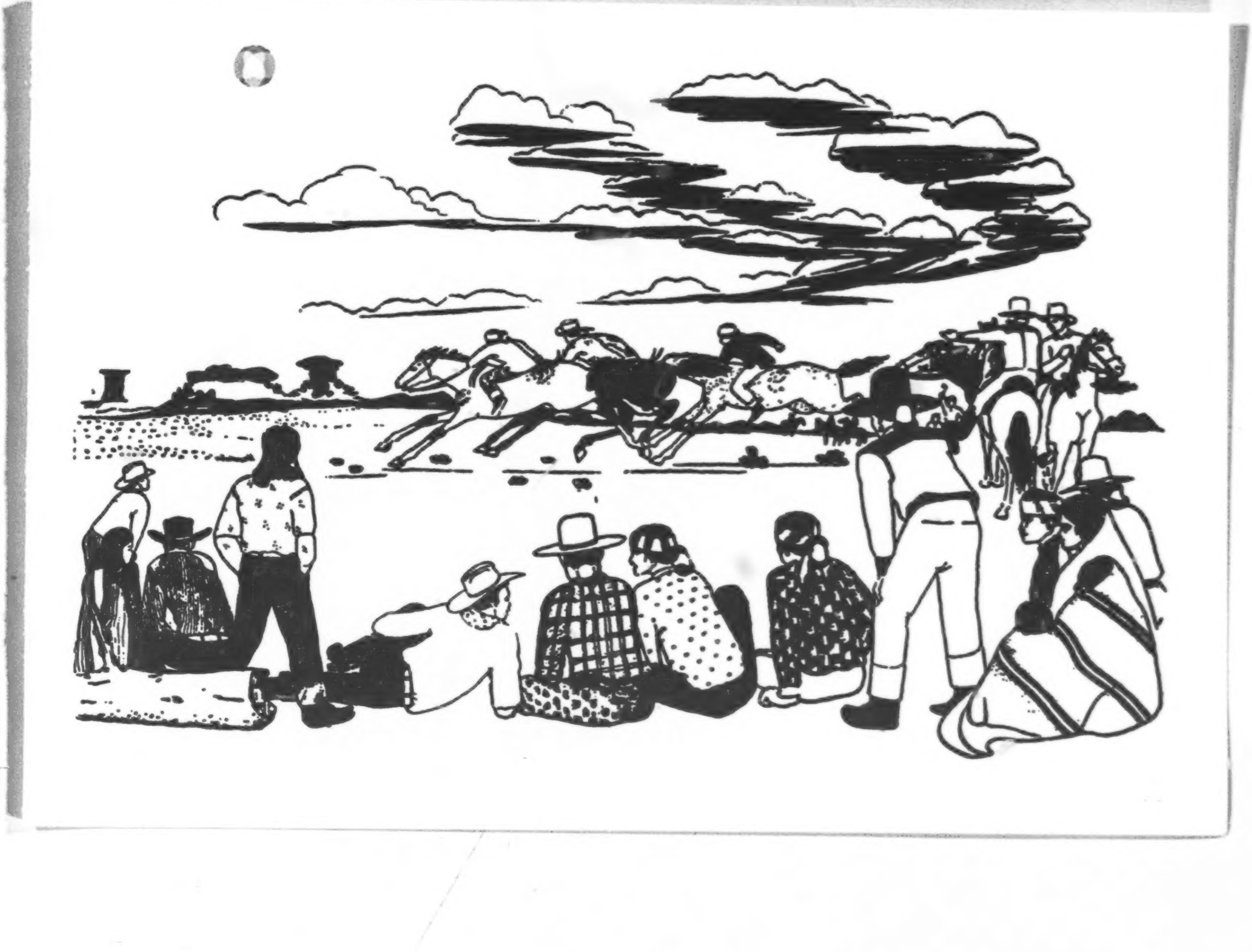
The black one that the trader likes
stretches out,
running,
running,
gets in front,
running,
running.

Sand flies.

People shout.

The People shout.

Now comes the horse
my uncle knows.



There he is,
there he is,
in front,
in front,
away in front.

He has won the race.

The horse my uncle knows
has won the race.

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The horses come back.

They are sweating.

Their sides go in and out
just like my blouse
goes in and out.

We are tired,
the horses and I are tired.

It takes some running
to win a race.

## GOING HOME

The horse race is finished.

My father has a concho belt
  and money in his pocket.

Now we go back
  on the home trail.

Back to the hogan.

Back to the sheep.

Everything is finished.

We have listened
  to the Holy Songs.

We have walked
  on the Holy Trail.

It is finished.

Our hearts are good.

All around us is good.

We ride along
  on the home trail.

It is finished.